EVERY STAIN A STORY: THE USE OF TEXTURES ON COSTUMES IN HOLLYWOOD ACTION, HORROR, AND SCI-FI MOVIES

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A THESIS SUBMITTED TO
THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF ARTS

GRADUATE PROGRAM IN INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES
YORK UNIVERSITY
TORONTO, ONTARIO

January 2019

Abstract

Dirt on clothing in Hollywood movies signifies cultural agreement about what is seen as defilement in everyday life. Artificially aged and distressed costumes are common in Hollywood films, and especially in genres like action, horror, and sci-fi. This thesis presents three case studies of the making, representation and reception of artificially aged and distressed costumes in *Mama* (2013), *Hunger Games* (20120, *Die Hard* (1988). Using an object-image-artefact model, this thesis critically analyzes how clothing and textures are developed as physical costumes for specific bodies to create characters on camera; how meaning is conveyed through the film image using textures on costumes; and how meaning changes once those costumes are re-contextualized in museum collections and displays. This thesis approaches contemporary discourses of Hollywood film costumes from the perspectives of body, material, and memory.

Dedication

Für Elise

Acknowledgements

The biggest thanks to my committee at York University for their continued support and passion for my dirty topic:

Professor Wenona Giles, Department of Anthropology
Associate Professor Susan Ingram, Department of Humanities
Associate Professor John Greyson, Department of Cinema & Media Arts Production

This thesis would not have been possible without the enthusiasm and support of the people who gave me insight into their creative work. Thanks to:

Writer and producer of *Mama* Barbara Muschietti
Professor Deborah Nadoolman Landis, founding director and chair of the David C. Copley Center for Costume Design, UCLA School of Theater, Film and Television
Costume designer Marylin Vance
Costume designer Luis Sequeira
Textile artist Silvana Sacco
Textile artist Debbie Williams
Curator emeritus Dwight Blocker Bowers , Division of Culture and the Arts, Smithsonian National Museum of American History
Curator Ryan Lintelman Division of Culture and the Arts, Smithsonian National Museum of American History
Director of the Film Reference Library Sylvia Frank, Toronto International Film Festival
Textile conservator Dr. Barbara Schröter Deutsche Kinemathek, Museum für Film und Fernsehen

I would also like to thank:
Fiona Fernandes, Graduate Program Coordinator who kept me on track;
Natasha Rubin, David C. Copley Center for Costume Design, UCLA School of Theater, Film and Television who helped me get in contact with the people I interviewed;
Museum Collections Curator Ellen M. Harrington, Academy of Motion Picture Arts, Costume Supervisor Victoria Snow, FOX Studios, and Keith Lodwick, Victoria and Albert Museum's Department of Theatre & Performance who helped me to find the right undershirt;
journalists Amy Crawford and Sheryl Garratt who gave me insights on their interviews with Bruce Willis and Marylin Vance; and Leah Mol who helped me with editing.

And last but not least, to my wife Elise Hodson whose endless support, proofreading and intellectual input helped me push this project forward into the light.

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Introduction

Every stain has a story. This thesis explores the use of artificial textures on the actor–character hybrid in horror, sci-fi, and action Hollywood films. The actor–character hybrid is the combination of an "authentic" body and its "constructed" identity. Costume designer and curator Deborah Landis suggests that it is the costume that makes the character. Costumes are made or altered to perfectly fit the body of the actor, and distressed or embellished to support the illusion of the character. This thesis focuses on a particular craft in the creation of film costumes: the art of ageing costumes through different textile design techniques to replicate bodily, earthly, and unearthly matter, or to put it more graphically, through the application of "artificial dirt." Artificial dirt on costumes in Hollywood films is a very specific cultural trope designed to ensure, dismantle, or refigure common beliefs of mineral matters, body fluids, and otherworldly matter seen as disgusting, dirty, and repulsive.

Artificial dirt is one of the many textures, as described below, used in film to create the identity of a character and refers to a wide range of applications that modify fabric and clothing. Artificial dirt is created using techniques such as washing, dying, painting, and spraying of cloth and costumes in order to change, narrow, or widen the range of contrasts on these surfaces. Textures as defined in this thesis refer to the physical presentation of material or "matter" as surface design on costumes. Textures on costumes in film can mimic pattern in the everyday world. For example, at the beginning of *The Hunger Games*, textures such as pulled threads on Everdeen's nightgown are used to reflect usage and the passage of time within the context of poverty.

It is common practice in the film industry to alter clothes with surface designs, and to use artificial dirt to blend the character into the film's narrative. The term artificial reflects the filmmakers' efforts to create identity and authenticity by blending body, costumes, and dirt-like textures in the mood and frame of the film image. Artificial textures used in film evoke specific significations and reactions to characters in the film, which the audience takes in, assesses, and reacts to. Artificial dirt is an aesthetic assumption by Hollywood filmmakers showing their interpretation of real-world dirt and is a tool to highlight specific socio-cultural tropes and to distinguish people and groups, or to distinguish us as humans from the 'other.'

Dirt as a real-world phenomenon activates certain mechanisms in us which are culturally formed and personally interpreted. We don't ignore dirt; we act because of it. Mary Douglas defines culture as the public, standardized values of a community, which mediate the experiences of individuals (Douglas 1966). Matter becomes significant as dirt when individual and group social parameters – in short, the cultural habits we grew up with – intervene. Dirt in itself is not dirty, but becomes dirt in the eye of the beholder. We label a substance as dirty, which, as framed by Douglas, lies outside of our system of things that are useful and acceptable (ibid). These labels are temporary and change with time. Dirt is everywhere – there is no world outside of dirt within the human realm. We are all subject to the same rules, but they are interpreted differently. As Douglas writes: "the difference between pollution behaviour in one part of the world and another is only a matter of detail." (Douglas 1966, p. 36). Dirt is a signifier for cultural, social and economic differences.

As case studies, I chose three films—*Die Hard* (1988), *The Hunger Games* (2012), and *Mama* (2013)—to research identity and authenticity on bodies and in characters' costumes in an object-image-artefact model (McTiernan; Ross; A. Muschietti, *Mama*). I discuss artificial textures in three chapters by following costumes through their "life cycle" as objects worn on

camera to become part of the film image and ending up as artefacts that summarize the transformation from worn clothing to iconic image signifying the actor-character hybrid.

Clothing is one of the oldest signifiers associated with the human body to distinguish social, cultural, and economic differences. In North America, like in the rest of the world, the common rules of how to dress are strongly influenced by a traditional regime of specific gendered clothing styles, cuts, materials, and colours. In addition to clothing, the dressed body wears the collected mineral and organic residue that comes in contact with the garments' fibres. Cleanliness, health, and hygiene are influential in the articulation of differences between "us" and "other." We are used to seeing others while they are clothed, and this leads us to sympathize with, reject, or hierarchize these dressed bodies because of their "look." Clothing, artificial dirt, and cleanliness play an important role in Hollywood cinema to either reinforce or enhance reception of body in the context of gender, race, and class. A film costume is bound to a specific time and place and its signification evolves at different speeds and through circulation. Costumes are strongly influenced by the cycle of fashion, but different styles of clothing change with alternating speeds. A comparison of the men's suits worn in *Die Hard*, from 1988, and *Mama*, made 25 years later, reveals differences in cut and colour, while the undershirt worn by Bruce Willis in *Die Hard* seems to be a timeless signifier for certain aspects of masculinity.

All textures discussed in this thesis are based on ideas of "reality" that filmmakers believed were suitable for their audiences at the time the film was created. The dirt shown does not copy real-world dirt as such but uses the idea of this real-world texture to emphasize realism in the film visually. Artificial dirt on film costumes ranges from light textures to symbolizing traces of wear, to heavier marks of sudden events, devastation, poverty, misery, and abandonment. Every single costume piece and its decoration or stains in the movies discussed are the result of research and negotiation between agents—like the writer, director, actor,

costume designer, cutter, sewer, textile artist, etc.—who create the costumes by turning the words of the script into imaginative objects of real-world existence. It is a visual negotiation between familiarity and the unexpected in order to entertain. Making costumes for films means creating bespoke clothing or altering mass-produced garments to fit the bodies of actors and their doubles while accommodating the different needs of a costume in specific scenes. The process of changing the costumes through ageing and distressing techniques must consider how the scene will be lit, filmed, and colour-corrected in post-production "by using colour, texture and silhouette to provide balance within the composition of the frame," so that the viewer can instantly place the character in the story and distinguish him from others. There is no coincidence in the design of a film image. Everything seen and heard in a film is there because of conscious decisions by the filmmakers. Artificial dirt as fabricated terror on clothing is one part of the "film architecture" and always already embedded in a meaningful context: the two-dimensional plane of the film image (Stutesman 21). I differentiate three categories of real dirt in relation to the human body: matter external to the body, bodily excretions, and wear and tear on clothing as an indicator of passing time. The first category of dirt includes non-human organic and mineral substances that leave stains and marks on body and clothing. The second category consists of normal bodily fluids and substances, some of which have significant relationships to the sex of the body, like saliva, sweat, urine, vaginal secretions, menstrual blood, semen, and dead hair and skin. On another level are the fluids that describe a sick and abnormal body, like vomit, diarrhea, pus, and other fluids and substances of curable diseases. The final level shows the body in a devastated state or death. This includes evidence of incurable diseases, like highly infectious and deadly viruses, as well as the dead body in its different states of decay. The third category refers to worn clothing. The fatigue of material relates to the human body, the passing of time, and the idea of memory, and consequently, it is a sign of political and economic differences.

A routine of bodily hygiene is deeply embedded in every culture and based on a stable regime of governance. As a universal base, the idea of how to deal with human and non-human matter related to bodily cleanliness is in its smallest unit a personal decision, if the person is free to express their wishes and has access to resources to fulfill them. However, the reception of dirt is culturally specific. Ideas of hygiene in North America are multifarious, but in the symbolic use of artificial dirt, cleanliness becomes a token simplified to show differences between gender, race, class roles, and the idea of us and the other. Artificial dirt is deeply influenced by media images and the division between "one of us" and "the other" in images of war, terror attacks, humanitarian crises, and accidents. Artificial dirt plays, from a North American point of view, with the assumptions of specific, culturally formed, and personally interpreted stereotypes of abnormality. Film images of death, catastrophe, and horror display a traumatic reality North Americans can relate to or imagine. Images can evoke familiarity and compassion if the person watching accepts the scene as part of their personal and cultural history, as in shared memories of World War II, the Holocaust, 9/11, natural catastrophes, etc. On the contrary, when images show others who cause or undergo suffering, these images can play with the fear that the North American way of living is finite and needs to be defended. The most recognized academic work on dirt might be *Purity and Danger* (1966) from anthropologist Mary Douglas. In it, Douglas claims dirt's nature is universal and forces people to establish moral, social, and cultural order: "Dirt offends against order. Eliminating it is not a negative movement, but a positive effort to organize the environment" (2). She claims that the recognition of matter as dirt is a universal phenomenon that is bound to different local and cultural interpretations of what matter and behaviour are seen as "dirty." Matter becomes significant as dirt when individual and group social parameters—in short, the cultural habits we grew up with—intervene. This view doesn't set matter in itself as dirty. Only in the act of looking at and categorizing it, we, as individuals,

groups, or a society, label dirt as "a threatening thing, person, or idea by ascribing alterity to it" (Cohen and Johnson ix). Dirt is self-referential to us; we interpret it as outside of our norm of what is useful and acceptable to ourselves. As Douglas states, "Where there is dirt, there is a system. Dirt is the by-product of a systematic ordering and classification of matter, insofar as ordering involves rejecting inappropriate elements" (36). Every human is subject to the same rules, which makes the structure of dirt arbitrary and exclusive. The concept of dirt as "matter out of place" is comprehensive; the concept of dirt has no outside world—the idea of dirt is universal. The interpretation, the meaning of what is seen as dirty depends on the negotiation, communication, and utterances between us. What is seen as dirty depends on ever-changing cultural parameters; this evolution of meaning makes the definition of "dirt" exclusive to specific cultural pockets. There is no "true" or universal meaning of dirt, which limits the understanding of what is seen as dirty for others. Although the systems in place to identify matter as dirt varies across cultures, the interpretation of what is seen as dirt differs from human to human. At the same time, labels of matter as dirt are temporary and changing; the different "ideas of dirt in one part of the world and another is only a matter of detail" (Douglas 36). The interpretation of matter as dirt is, therefore, a temporary signifier of cultural differences.

The academic view of dirt is multidisciplinary. Much of the current work comes from the fields of natural sciences and humanities and explores the social and cultural implications of dirt, cleanliness, and hygiene. For example, *Filth: Dirt, Disgust, and Modern Life*, edited by William A. Cohen and Ryan Johnson, "focus[es] on filth in literature and cultural material" in the nineteenth century. *Dirt: The Erosion of Civilizations* (2007), by geologist David R. Montgomery, specifies dirt as "good soil" for agriculture to produce food in a worldwide economy. A publication from the same year edited by Ben Campkin and Rosie Cox, titled *Dirt: New Geographies of Cleanliness and Contamination*, is a crossover between architectural history

and theory, geography, and gender studies and looks at "dirt and cleanliness [and] the history of concepts of cleanliness and cleaning practices." *Dirt: The Filthy Reality of Everyday Life* is the catalogue for an exhibition of the same name shown at the Wellcome Collection in London, England, published in 2011. A newer publication, *Dirt* (2012), edited by the landscape and architectural designers Megan Born, Helene Furján, and Lily Jencks, looks at the crossover of dirt in architecture, art, and history. Each of these publications deals in depth with the cultural impact of matter seen as dirt, either in the form of waste or hygiene.

I first had the idea to write about artificial textures on film costumes in 2014 while working on the last sequel of The Hunger Games film series, *Mockingjay Part 2*, in Berlin. In the textile workshop at Studio Babelsberg, images of people covered in debris and dust from the 9/11 attacks were hanging as inspiration for the look of a group of costumes that had to be painted, aged, and distressed. I was both repelled and fascinated at once. The media images of the terror of 9/11 had become mainstream signifiers to represent victims of ultimate evil in Hollywood movies. The research images I saw will most likely never be seen by the film's intended audience, but they give the designer and craftspeople working on the costumes an authentic visual reference point for the creation of artificial dirt needed for the characters. The use of real historical media footage fabricates a factual base that can be altered to meet the expectations of the filmmakers and audience to tell a visual story that feels authentic but is visually attractive to the narrative told. The artificial dirt feels real and authentic but is not an accurate historical replication. It was on that film production that I became interested in the extended meaning of fabricated terror as texture (dirt) on film costumes and how the media images of specific real-world events become a visual reference for the look of authenticity in film. Artificial dirt on lead or background costumes creates a subliminal message, always placed in front of the camera with a visual idea in mind to move the story forward. Artificial dirt on

clothing in film stretches the idea of real-world dirt beyond the visual and personal experiences of people in a certain cultural realm to emphasize a hyperrealism in the film narrative that the viewer can understand but not necessarily experience.

The first chapter, "*Mama*: The Making of a Tattered Ghost from Script to Screen," analyzes how the "written-costumes" described in the film script are transformed to create costumes and textures as objects used in conjunction with the actor's body on camera. The second chapter, "*The Hunger Games*: From Domestic Rags to Acting Riches," analyzes the transformation of artificial textures from "dirt" to "glamour" on the costumes of Jennifer Lawrence seen in the film *The Hunger Games*. In the final case study, "*Die Hard*: The Undershirt and the American Hero on Screen," I focus on costumes as artefacts in costume collections and exhibitions. The goal of these three chapters is to connect and analyze, using an interdisciplinary approach, the influence of the people and things involved in creating, capturing, and curating clothing and artificial dirt in the context of Hollywood films.

Fieldwork Methodology

There were several fieldwork methods used in the gathering of data for this thesis. First, I analysed the scripts of each film, which I either acquired free of charge online or through my professional contacts. I carried out textual analysis of the scripts to identify descriptions of clothing, the defilement of clothing, and actions that led to the defilement of clothing in the cases of *Mama* and *Die Hard*. Second, I acquired binders used by the costume crew to create "the look" of the costumes and assessed how their image research was informed by the script and how those images inspired the costumes. Third, I viewed the three films and analysed the use and relationships of artificial dirt, texture, clothing and bodies. Fourth, I carried out qualitative interviews with three filmmakers (all of whom were previous professional contacts) and five

curators (all of whom were identified by previous professional contacts). Fifth, I visited three costume collections at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA), the Sony Pictures Studios costume collection in Los Angeles, and the German Film Museum in Berlin. I carried out object analysis on relevant costumes/artefacts in these museums as described in the chapters that follow.

Chapter One: *Mama* (2013): The Making of a Tattered Ghost from Script to Screen

The first case study is the horror film *Mama* released in 2013. In the film, director Andrés (Andy) Muschietti tells the story of the nineteenth-century woman Edith, who turns into a vengeful ghost called Mama. This chapter looks at the creation process of costumes before their use on camera. In *Mama* the dirty female otherness triggers a cathartic change in the life of a modern-day blended family when the ghostly creature Mama intercedes in the human world. The dirty texture on Mama's dress signifies past wrongdoing and radical difference between the contemporary setting of the film and the nineteenth-century creature. A specific emphasis in this chapter is on the image research conducted by the costume crew to determine the costume style and level of artificial dirt needed to accommodate the different bodies and technical requirements of the film shoot. *Mama* is an American-financed horror movie that was filmed and produced in late 2011 in Toronto, Canada, and released into theatres in early 2013. The costume design in *Mama* is particularly interesting as it follows a distinct pattern of pristine and filthy and combines different periods of dress styles to emphasize the idea of otherness.

The story (and creature) Mama is based on a short film developed by the siblings Andy and Barbara Muschietti. In 2009 they filmed a short version in Spain to promote their idea for a feature-length horror film: "*Mamá* the short was a style exercise, we [sic] put the credits on and sent it to festivals. We started to raise interest, and a lot of people were asking what was the story behind it" (Rich). The Muschiettis were discovered and backed by Guillermo del Toro, the internationally acclaimed director of *Pan's Labyrinth* (2006), *Pacific Rim* (2013), *Crimson Peak* (2015), and *Shape of Water* (2018), for which Del Toro recently won the Academy Award for Best Director and Best Picture. Del Toro became aware of the project and supported it as an

executive producer. Andy Muschietti served as the director of *Mama*, while his sister Barbara became the producer of the feature film, which became a commercial success.

Mama follows two young children who are raised by a lost soul, a ghost called Mama. The film begins with a violent act: Jeffrey Desange (Nikolaj Coster-Waldau), a hedge-fund manager and father of two young girls, Victoria and Lilly, kills his co-workers and wife after losing money in a stock-market crash. After a car accident, Jeffrey flees with his two children into the woods, where they find shelter in an abandoned but haunted cabin. Jeffrey is killed and carried off by Mama, played by Javier Botet, a ghostly figure who inhabits the cottage and who gives the film its name. The children stay in the cabin, where they are nurtured and taken care of by Mama. The second part of the movie starts when the children are found five years later, transformed into feral creatures. They are brought to a psychiatric institution and put under the care of Dr. Gerald Dreyfuss (Daniel Kash) and subsequently foster parents: Jeffrey's brother Lucas Desange (also Nikolaj Coster-Waldau) and his partner, Annabel (Jessica Chastain).

This chapter focuses on two sets of clothing. The first is the nightgown worn by Edith Brennan, an asylum seeker in the mid-nineteenth century, who will later become known as the ghost Mama. The costume is designed to represent a period garment. It is used in pristine condition on the character Edith and ragged on Mama to underline the transformation from a nineteenth-century woman to a spirit occupying the present. In opposition, the costumes of the two children, Victoria and Lilly, transform through different clothing styles from upper class, to feral, to institutionalized lower class. This case study focuses on how written words are transformed into on-screen costumes for the characters Mama, Victoria, and Lilly.

The "dirty" costumes discussed in this chapter are worn by female characters Edith; the ghost Mama; and the sisters, Victoria and Lilly, who are all subjects outside of a normalized social realm, and who are misunderstood by the authorities taking care of or dealing with them.

In the analysis that follows, I show how "dirt" functions as a gender-specific texture to emphasize individual traumas of women who cannot take care of themselves or be helped by a governmental structure tasked with taking care of them.

Film costumes and their textures are genre specific; a horror film like *Mama* might use textures, while action films such as *Die Hard* and *White House Down*, discussed in Chapter 3, will not. The creation of film costumes and their textures starts with information provided in the script and ends with the final image on screen. The purpose of this chapter is to give an overview of the process of designing artificial dirt, from creating out of the written clothing in the script an character, to making the costume and its artificial textures. I trace how the meaning of artificial texture was negotiated and shifted from script, to research, to costume, to the final film images. First, I look at how the nineteenth-century woman's nightgown of the character Edith Brennan turns into the tattered dress of Mama, the ghost. Second, I trace the development of Victoria's and Lilly's costumes from the clothing of young, upper-middle-class children, to the rags of feral children, to the gowns of patients in a psychiatric hospital, and finally to foster children in a middle-class urban setting. Dirty textures are used in *Mama* to illustrate the passing of time, social class, cultural alterity, and otherness, which, as the chapter will show, are the result of a thorough team process involving human and non-human actors.

Sources

The material for this chapter is based on five sources: the film *Mama*, the film script, a costume image research binder, interviews conducted with five people involved in the creation of the film, and my personal experiences working as a textile artist, costumer, and costume designer in the costume department of film and television productions.[1] I also used interviews with Andy

Muschietti and Barbara Muschietti, Del Toro, and others who worked on *Mama*, found online either as video or text. Most of these interviews were part of the *Mama* Blu-ray edition.

I interviewed the costume designer, Luis Sequeira; the two textile artists, Debbie Williams and Silvana Sacco; the digital modelling and texturing supervisor, Chris MacLean; and the writer/producer, Barbara Muschietti. The interviews explored the film script, the research images Sequeira collected, and the interviewees' individual roles in creating the costumes. Because *Mama* was shot in Toronto, many of the interviewees were local, including Sequeira, Sacco, and Williams. It was important to talk with the costume designer and the two textile artists involved in the creation process of the aged and distressed costumes to get detailed insights into the design of the costumes and their creation. The idea to alter costumes and blend them into the film's narrative by artificially ageing them is a common practice in the film industry, but little known to the academic world. Additionally, I spoke with Barbara Muschietti to get a perspective that was not directly connected to the costume department. I posed similar questions to all interviewees about the design and creation process of the costumes for the characters Edith, Mama, and the children, Victoria and Lilly. The questions changed only slightly when talking about the specific responsibilities and areas the interviewees worked in; for example, Sequeira showed me his research binder for the *Mama* costumes, and Barbara Muschietti answered specific questions regarding the scriptwriting.

The interviews were coded using the qualitative data analysis program, Atlas.ti. I followed a guideline of coding based on a paper by Renata Tesch (1–7). I divided the coding system into fictitious and real people: characters, actors; objects; clothing, costume; texture; and adjectives describing the characters, objects, and textures. I also distinguished between the script, research, and film image.

Edith Brennan's and Mama the Ghost's Dresses in the Script

Costumes are usually not given much attention in scripts unless they play a key role at certain moments of the story, and indeed descriptions of Mama's attire in the script are rare. The Muschiettis already had a clear image of Mama in mind based on the short film. As a result, the look of Mama in the feature film is close to the original short.[2] The Mama dress signifies this character as an otherworldly being, but as the story reveals, it also signifies the human being she was before turning into a ghost: a young, mentally ill woman named Edith, living in the nineteenth century in a sanctuary in Alleghany County, close to Clifton Forge, Virginia. The Mama dress is based on Edith's nightgown and is the most important costume in the film. The dress had to stay the same while simultaneously transforming over a period of approximately one hundred and fifty years. Edith's dress transforms into the garment of the ghost and finally becomes the signifier for her redemption. The script includes only indirect descriptions of dirt or distress on her dress, such as in one of the final scenes when we see Mama at her full size, described in the script as "Mama howls... then dives into the very earth. Rises from the ground..." (Muschietti et al. 104). Sacco, the textile artist, acknowledged in our interview that this quote inspired her view of the distressed Mama costume.

Edith Brennan's Dress in the Script

Edith is scripted to appear only once wearing a "nightgown," in the scene at the orphanage in which she kills the nun nursing her baby. No texture is named in the written-clothing description: *"The skinny woman wrenches the child from the nun's arms—and stabs the nun twice. [Edith is] a skinny woman in a nightgown. Beautiful but somehow wrong. Creepy as a saint"* (Muschietti et al. 66). The physical description of Edith in the script speaks to her gender ("woman") and her physiognomy ("skinny"); the adjectives related to her appearance are

"beautiful," "creepy," and "somehow wrong." The word pairs used to describe Edith are oppositional, pairing a positive adjective with something negative and inhuman. These comparisons suggest impurity. Her actions are described with verbs like "wrenches" and "stabs," violent and unexpected from a skinny woman. This description is the foundation for the "real" character to be built by the actor and the "look" of the character created through hair, makeup, costumes, and props. In the scene following the stabbing, the skinny woman is running through the woods with the baby in her arms, followed by a mob. The dynamic in this written scene comes mostly from the space left by the ellipses in the script, the areas where nothing is said, and the idea of sound is introduced: "Carrying the child, the skinny woman races through thick woods ... glances back ... hears the sound of a distant mob" (Muschietti et al. 66). Edith then jumps off a cliff into a lake with her baby child. As they fall to their deaths, the bodies are separated from each other, and Edith turns into the ghostly creature Mama, seeking the body of her baby. (149 Ext. Deeper Into Woods: Then she stands and runs and hurls herself from the edge of the cliff ... 150 Ext. Cliff's Edge: slamming into a large branch that juts out of the cliff-face. Her body then plummets into the water.) The separation of mother and child is not mentioned in the scene and is revealed only later in the script, when Dr. Dreyfuss is interviewing Victoria. She explains: "A long, long time ago a crazy lady ran away from a hospital for sad people. She took her baby. They jumped into the water. She fell into the water, but the baby did not. She missed her baby real bad. She went walking in the woods, looking for it. She walked and walked for a real long time" (Muschietti et al. 88). This short section is delivered in spoken language and does not describe the whereabouts of Edith's body and her baby after they jumped off the cliff.

Mama's Dress in the Script

Within the traditional idioms of scriptwriting is the art of evoking an atmosphere of emotions in the reader that can easily be translated into mental images. These imaginations are the first reference point for the different people involved in the filmmaking. In this format of scriptwriting it is not common to delve into too many precise visual, set, or costume details—the emphasis is usually placed on well-chosen adverbs/adjectives that amplify motivations and action. The only words that describe the ghost in the script, besides her physical deformations, are "decay" and "ectoplasm." Decay, a biological process, evokes images of decomposition, while ectoplasm is also a biological term but used more often to describe paranormal appearances, things happening outside of the human world and normally not visible. Mama is similarly denoted: "We see the contours of a nightmare: broken spine, upper body bent horribly to one side ... Decaying skinny woman. Half solid, half floating ectoplasm. Long, dark limbs, broken in many places. Hair like a living entity: it waves with the spooky grace of a centipede" (Muschietti et al. 96). Two other scenes show the spectrum of Mama's presence as revengeful spirit and loving mother. In the first scene the psychiatrist Dr. Dreyfuss, who represents the modern-day version of the institution that "the marginalised and oppressed madwoman Edith Brennan" fell prey to, goes to the cabin at night to find and record Mama (Jackson 157–58). He finds Mama, and she kills him. The stroboscopic light of Dr. Dreyfuss's camera flashes, revealing "three images of something terrible coming for him" (Muschietti et al. 69–71). The script does not say much about Mama's costume in this scene but suggests that every detail of Mama and her dress will be seen in the harsh light of the flash (see fig. 1.1)[3]. The second scene is the conclusion of the film, when Mama, Victoria, and Lilly are on the cliff, and Annabel and Lucas approach to rescue them. In the final moments, the children separate. Mama and Lilly are "absolutely in love," floating "just beyond the edge of the cliff," wrapped in Mama's ectoplasmic

dress (Muschietti et al. 102–09). The dress grows into a flowerlike cocoon and in the final act, both Mama and Lilly "plummet ... towards the branch that once smashed the life from a madwoman called Edith Brennan" and the dress explodes into "a thousand black moths." At times, the dress seems to be a "living" entity, part of Mama's body; the ghost seems to be able to control the dress's size and shape. The actions of Mama described in the script indirectly involve her attire; when Mama, at the end of the movie, "dives into the earth ... erupts before Lucas ... throws him to the ground [and] reaches inside his chest and squeezes his heart," the impression is created that Mama, as a physical ghost, is exposed to the elements surrounding her. Therefore, it is clear that her attire might be affected by all of the action.

The Making of the Dresses for Edith Brennan and the Ghost Mama and Their Appearance in the Film

In the previous section, I showed how minimally the clothing and its textures are described in the *Mama* script, and the conclusion can be drawn that none of these written images signifies anything class or race specific. The script does not speak about Edith's background, nor her skin colour, education, or social status. The social definition of who Edith was and who Mama is comes from the subtext: the written information about the places the characters act. The people who created the look of the film had to fill in all of these missing links in creating Mama's clothing. The common cultural background and the placement of the film's story—a small town in Virginia—create a certain expectation of costume style and dirt texture. The region in which Mama's story is set connects to Appalachia, a "cultural region" in the eastern United States often used in fiction as a poor, idle, and backwoods backdrop. The next chapter, on the *Hunger Games*, explains Appalachia's history and connection to Hollywood in depth. For the horror film *Mama*, this mise en scène of small-town America and remote backlands works to conjure a dirty

nineteenth-century ghost invading a present-day family. The dirty texture seen on the ghost Mama and the feral children is a direct visual link to this faraway and impoverished cliché of Appalachia.

Drawings and Sketches of the Mama Dress

Different people involved in the costume-creation process translate the word-images in the script into images by drawing sketches or finding reference images through research. These images are either artistic or technical illustrations, or images of a variety of different techniques. Andy Muschietti "had done illustrations of what he envisioned" (Sequeira, *First Interview with Author, Part 2*), and Del Toro, Sequeira, and Sacco did drawings and technical sketches to show certain aspects of the dresses. Sacco reworked the sketches of the Mama dress by illustrating Sequeira's ideas of texture, so "the director and producer could understand" (Sacco) what Sequeira had suggested: "There was a clear sketch of Mama. I can tell from a drawing what they wanted, and then I redrew the sketch for Luis [Sequeira]" (Sacco). Drawing was a method of communication among Sequeira, Andy Muschietti, and Del Toro to create and agree on concepts for the Mama dresses.[4] In addition to creating these drawings, Sacco and Williams sampled different styles of texture through ageing and dyeing textile swatches, which accompanied the drawings.

The Research and the Research Images

In the process of sketching and finding the right ageing techniques for the Mama and feral children costumes, Sequeira, Williams, and Sacco consulted the written-textures in the script and supplemented them with image-textures they found through researching photographs of decaying garments from dead, mummified bodies. As Luis Sequeira related, image research

was done primarily to gather initial visual inspiration for how the text of the script could be translated into a garment: “The initial widespread research came from the internet, where I spent an enormous amount of time sourcing reference photos.” The research, it seems, was an associative process of meaning generation through images: “You take the elements of the project and the characters and you start to research.” Sequeira shared the images with his superiors in order to align the visual principles and present the director with “various options of things that speak to you” (Sequeira, *First Interview with Author, Part 2*).

As the main online sources for his research, Sequeira listed “Google on museums archives, universities’ pages, blogs, and Tumblr, or Pinterest, etc.” In addition, he conducted oral research by talking to or interviewing people related to the narrative the film is set in: “And then it is also finding people to speak with, if there is someone appropriate that you want to speak to who is actually part of the story or script that you are working on” (Sequeira, *First Interview with Author, Part 2*). In *Mama*, Sequeira had to dress distinct contemporary characters, such as members of a punk-rock band, judges, hospital workers, etc. He did in-depth research for this, which falls outside the scope of this thesis. Sequeira concluded that he prefers online research as an initial method, as it is non-linear:

> What I love about the internet ... you are looking here for something and you find something that is to the side, it either relates to your project or it may not relate to your project, but it sends you on the other path. Where a book is really a study, a focused study. (Sequeira, *First Interview with Author, Part 1*)

> When you put an image board together you want to create a mood, you want to let the director know that you are envisioning the characters in certain ways, sometimes without showing clothing. (Sequeira, *Second Interview with Author*)

The term “mood” is key in helping to create a common, mood-specific vocabulary for the different participants. The individual emotions and memories of each actor are aligned while looking at the images. By not showing clothing first, which is in itself already structured with specific signification (fashion), Sequeira creates room for discussing a structure for the character into which the costumes will be integrated.

The texture found in these images creates a “vocabulary” for Sequeira, his team, and his superiors to discuss the look of the costumes: the kind of colours, techniques, and levels of ageing and distress needed. Sequeira has a certain rule in place to mediate between the different players—the textile artists, the director—and their imagination of texture to be created on the garments. He calls it the “20%–30% rule. Do 20%–30%, take it, have it looked at, let’s discuss it.” With this policy in place, he ensures that the “director is part of the creative process” and decelerates the creation process by “forcing the technician, the artist, to layer the work as opposed to doing one big thing.” With this rule in mind, Sequeira ensures that the technician doing the work and the people in charge of the overall look of the film are part of the same rhythm in this process. Similar to his descriptions of the mood boards (collages of images) he created for the different characters, Sequeira talks about feeling and emotions when talking to people to determine the right look and level of texture: “What is feeling right, what is not feeling right? How much more you want to go?” (Sequeira, *First Interview with Author, Part 1*). The image-texture in the mood boards is translated into a symbolized artificial texture on the costume in the film image. Equipped with the details of the image-texture in the research images and illustrations, Sacco and Williams started sampling different textures on a selection of fabrics: “We wanted to see how things move in the wind, how things look when they are aged, what was the best for the dyeing process” (Sacco). On a different level, the costumes Sequeira designed

were in some cases digitally enhanced or digitally rebuilt. Here the physical costumes, and the level and kind of texture, became a guideline for the digital visual effects.

The Dress of Mama in the Short Film and the Dresses of Edith and Mama in the Feature Film

The light-coloured dress the creature Mama is wearing in the Muschiettis' short film is a simple off-white dress, gathered at the waist, with a high neck and short sleeves. Studying the film images, this dress does not look aged, and no artificial texture appears to have been added. The dress looks stiff and is made of a thin but sturdy fabric, like cotton. The cotton fabric for this dress is an economical cloth for everyday attire. This light dress feels out of date. It is not a contemporary cut with the elaborate trim and pleat details on the bust and sleeves, but it does not look as "period" as the dresses of Edith and Mama in the feature. The length of the dresses differs; the light dress in the short film is three-quarter length, while the dresses of Edith and Mama are full length, down to the ankles. The drape, how the fabric falls on the body, the weight of the fabric, and how it swings while moving are different in all the dresses. Edith's dress in the feature film was made of off-white silk jacquard and slightly aged. The darker, ombré, heavily aged and distressed dress of Mama was made of layers of lightweight silk to achieve an airy and floating effect.[5] All dresses have a similar silhouette but are quite different in their details. Though Barbara Muschietti states that the dress in the short film is the direct link to its successors in the feature, there are some important differences. In the short, the past story of Mama was not yet developed, while in the feature, the dress becomes a symbol for the story of Edith turned into Mama. The low-budget production of the short did not have the capacity of a full costume department to do significant research and create the costumes from scratch. The dress in the short does not reveal much specific about the horrifying creature, leaving it to the

viewer to solve the riddle of its whereabouts. In the feature, different versions of the same dress tell the tale of inequity, redemption, and salvation.

The most significant differences between the one dress in the short film and the many dresses in the feature are style and fabric. In total, four different versions of the Mama dress worn by two different actors were needed for the feature film. Each dress was made in multiples to accommodate the uncertainties of the work on set. Creating the costumes for the two characters was an artistic endeavor, aesthetically and technically. The four sets of Mama's and Edith's costumes added up to approximately sixteen handmade, tailored, aged, and dyed dresses for the different aspects of the film.[6] This included the following:

1. The nightgown of Edith Brennan (Hannah Cheesman): Two dresses made from silk jacquard

2. The nightgown of dead Edith played by an unknown actor: One dress made from cotton

3. The short dress of Mama the Ghost (Javier Botet): Made from silk

4. The long dress of Mama the Ghost: Made from silk and digitally enhanced

5. Multiples of these costumes made to fit the stuntpeople, who according to IMDB were Alison Reid ("Alison Reid") and Dana Jones ("Dana Jones")

The different dresses all represented one garment, but each dress style had its own scene-specific and technical requirements. The textures on these different garments are layered to tell the progressive distortion of the garment by outside factors and the (inhuman) power the ghost Mama has to alter her form and shape. The idea of one garment, the nightgown mentioned in the script, comes to dress two bodies. The nightgown worn by Edith (Hannah Cheesman) becomes the tattered dress of Mama (Javier Botet). This gender shift from female to male actor is mirrored in the character of Mama. The female anatomy of Edith's "*skinny ... beautiful but somehow wrong*" body shape is reassembled on Botet's long-limbed body with elaborate face and body

prosthetics. The wrongness of female beauty suggested for Edith in the script turns into unsightliness. In a short scene [01:28:38–01:29:29] at the end of the film Mama holds the bones of her deceased child and her facial expressions change from a dark, concave form, with large, deep-set glossy eye bowls and long, rotten teeth, to the light-coloured, convex, soft face of Edith and back to Mama. *"For a long, sad moment, Mama manifests as a lovely young woman"* (Muschietti et al. 104). In the close-up scene the gaunt body of Mama turns into the female beauty of Edith and changes back to the "*decaying skinny woman*" (Muschietti et al. 96). The gender shift on the level of the actors influences the character, its costumes, and textures. The female body of Cheesman is associated with beauty, while the male body conveys its opposite. The costumes of Edith and Mama are gendered in aesthetic stereotypes towards female beauty but are not static in their form and look.

Edith's Silk and Cotton Light-Coloured Nightgown and the Mama Dress

These scene-specific creations also take into account aesthetic and technical particularities. Edith's nightgown is the basis for the Mama dress, but as outlined above, the different versions of it were created in fabrics of different qualities (silk and cotton). The first costume we see Edith wearing in the feature-length horror film, here played by Hannah Cheesman, is an off-white dress. It occurs in the 1850s orphanage flashback scene, set in rural Virginia. The dress was made of natural-coloured silk jacquard to give the dress weight but keep it levitated. The dress was built twice in the tailor's workshop "only because of the feeling, we were not sure if it was going to be really wet during the shooting day and we wanted to have a backup because if the silk got wet it would get very draggy" (Sequeira, *First Interview with Author, Part 2*). A second version of the dress with the same cut was made of muslin. It "was supposed to be rotting," Sequeira explains, "so I did not want to use the thick fabric, I wanted to

use the lighter fabric." The thinner cotton version of the dress was aged and distressed for a short scene in which we see the dead body of Edith floating in the water (A. Muschietti, *Mama*, 01:24:12–01:24:24). Edith's nightgown was inspired by women's undergarment styles from a photocopy of a fashion catalogue, included in the *Mama* photo research binder (Brothers). The top part of Edith's costume in the film is barely recognizable, seen only in a short sequence reflected in a mirror (00:59:44). What we see is a deep round cut, a scoop or tank top–style, decorated with lace lining the neckline and the bust. The colour of the dress and the lace look the same. Sequeira mentioned that this version of the dress was also aged, and texture was applied to make it look worn (*First Interview with Author, Part 2*). Two of the same dresses were made to accommodate the running scene of Edith in the woods holding her baby prior to her jump (00:59:52–01: 00:25), but scenes showing her costume were not included in the final version of the film. As Edith's nightgown is mirrored in the Mama dress, looking at a film still of Mama can help to decipher more details of the design. The costume is most clearly seen when she does away with Dr. Dreyfuss in the cabin. In the image, the lace covers the whole top part of the dress and the sleeves of the nightgown. The dress is ruffled just under the bust with a wide trim. The gathering gives the nightgown a high-waisted appearance in the Empire style. In the search for the right look for the costumes, a historical impression seems to have been more important than historical accuracy: "We melded a few different periods together, it was just looking at beautiful detailing." Sequeira talks about finding the right research images for the mood boards: "Sometimes it is the mood of the portrait or the imagery, it is a detail that could be interesting to incorporate or at least present" (*Second Interview with Author*). The research binder also contains images of nineteenth-century "madwomen," but there are no notes about the origins of these six images, besides watermarks imprinted on some of

them. The origin of the images, all collected through online research by the filmmakers, is important for my research. I compared the original intended meaning of these images with how Luis and his team translated those meanings into details on the nightgown (see fig. 1.2). My research about the origin of these images, and the time, place, and social status of the women depicted, revealed that the clothing and textures shown are of different cultural settings, periods, and social levels. The costumes used are a hybrid of many visual influences, not necessarily true to a woman living in an East Coast sanatorium in the late nineteenth century. The missing details about where the images were found or who is shown in them suggests that these details were not important to the researcher. The dresses the women are wearing in the portraits are obviously not new—the cloth is wrinkled and creased. There are also photographs of upper-class women from the same period wearing black silk dresses.[7] In comparison, it became obvious that the six "madwomen" belong to a different, lower class. They look unkempt and poorly dressed in "economical cotton" (Severa 88).

After investigating the watermarks on some of the reference images in the research binder, I discovered that the page showing ladies' undergarments belonged to a Bloomingdale's catalogue, the New York luxury department store, from 1866 (Brothers) (see fig. 1.3). The woman's portrait, on a photocopy of what appeared to be an undated painting, was signed with the watermark of "© The Bowes Museum." In the museum's online collection, this painting is attributed to the French painter Louise Marie Jeanne (1784–1862) and the depicted woman is named as Pauline Bonaparte, the younger sister of the French emperor Napoleon (see fig. 1.4). The six photocopies of photographs watermarked "Art Resource" were a study of patients from the Surrey County Asylum, Springfield, in Tooting, London, photographed by the British psychiatrist Hugh Welch Diamond, who presented the pictures titled "Patient, Surrey County Lunatic Asylum" in 1856 to the Photographic Society of London ("Hugh Welch Diamond |

Patient, Surrey County Lunatic Asylum | The Met") (see figs. 1.5 and 1.6). Last, there are copies from The Metropolitan Museum of Art exhibition catalogue "Alexander McQueen: Savage Beauty" from 2011(see fig. 1.7).

The fabric used to make the nightgown is silk jacquard, a product shown only in the research photographs of nineteenth-century upper-class families. In contrast, the images of the six women show institutionalized patients in an asylum, most likely wearing their only clothing: smocks, dresses, and shawls of rough, heavily used fabrics that cover their bodies. The artificial texture applied to Edith's nightgown was the only sign that aligned the costume with the clothing of the mental patients. Sequeira explains this free interpretation of historical facts with Mama being a fictional character, a ghost. The loose connection of the character to real life influenced the depiction of ghosts in film and Sequeira's choice of fabric and artificial dirt: "The real things are all North American, but the actual imagery of inspiration can come from anything" (Sequeira, *Second Interview with Author*). American culture is the matrix within which his (reading of the images) decisions have to make sense; the use of fabric and dirt is filtered through the imagined eyes of American viewers.

It was important for the Muschiettis to place the film's narrative and the origin of Edith within America's history. They chose to set the plot in the Appalachian area, a region widely known for its poor and devastating living conditions in the nineteenth century. It was important for the siblings that the Mama dress mirror this destitution and show Edith, here played by the actress Cheesman, in a plain outfit as a poor woman, living in an asylum.

A second important factor to them was finding an actor to represent Mama who was tall and had disproportionate, misshapen bodily features. Most of the Mama scenes were shot with the real actor Botet, and not a digitally created ghost. With Botet they found an actor whose talent and bodily features perfectly matched their idea of the ghost (see fig. 1.8). Botet is, as a

result of a birth defect, “very tall and has terrifying hands, he's about 6 feet 8 and kind of thin.”[8] With these features, Botet could create movements unlike “a normal human flesh and blood person would” (A. Muschietti, *Mama*), which made him perfect to play the ghost Mama. Botet’s body came to define the style and cut of Mama’s dress. His long limbs, combined with prosthetics and digitally composed hair, define the silhouette of Mama and her sleeveless dress.[9]

In the film images, the colour of the dress looks similar to the colour of dirty texture applied to Botet’s body. The low-cut neck, missing sleeves, and tightly cut bust give Mama a feminine look. The scoop neckline–styled top in the Mama dress was built to “show off the body, to show as little fabric as possible in the upper area, to really utilize the skinniness of the ghost” (Sequeira, *Second Interview with Author*). The bottom of the Mama dress looks much darker than the top. The hem seems to be falling apart; holes and hanging bits of fabric are visible. The garments Mama wears become increasingly distressed over time, representing her experience, wear and tear in the “real world.” In a close-up shot of Mama, it is obvious that the lace attached around the armholes, neckline, and bust is ripped and parts of it are hanging loose, detached from the corpus of the dress. The Mama dress was built in a short and a long version, each with multiples for different technical requirements during the shoot. To make one of the dresses, eight metres of fabric were needed (Sequeira, *First Interview with Author, Part 1*). The skirt of the short dress was made of three different layers of fabric, which all had to be dyed and aged. “We had secured a hundred and thirty meters of fabric,” Sequeira remembers. To save fabric, the mock-ups, on which Sequeira’s team tested different styles of ageing and dyeing, were done “in half scale” (Sequeira, *First Interview with Author, Part 1*). “I read the script,” Sequeira states, as a starting point for his design. Based on the script, Sequeira assessed how often, where, and in which environments Edith and Mama would appear. He broke down their actions and possible stunt scenes in excerpts such as: “Mama had to walk under the ground, and Mama was walking

with a hip that was broken, and Mama was in the sky and her dress was like a cloud." This allowed him to assess the number of costumes and multiples of each costume needed. For every costume group, the actions the costumes will perform determine the level of ageing and distress. Sequeira's design process started with the part of the dress that was seen most: "I worked backward because the majority of the film is in the now, Mama as a ghost. I did tip my head and looked at the historical thing, but I had to look also at all the things that dress needed to do ... and design the dress to be able to do all those things" (Sequeira, *First Interview with Author, Part 1*). Mama kept some of her human characteristics: she can sing, though not speak, interact physically with objects and living things, and can be present in only one place at a time. However, her transmutable character is not bound to the limitations of human bodies, even though her physical appearance is described in terms of specific bodily features: "broken spine, upper body bent horribly to one side, decaying, skinny, half solid, half ectoplasm, long, dark limbs, broken in many places." This enumeration suggests a body that should be unable to function under current living conditions. The ghost can travel "under the earth," go through walls and bodies, and float. The ghost is a hybrid of a physical, "solid," and mental phenomenon, driven by a psychological imbalance. The script paraphrases her as "a twisted, dark figure," with abilities like "diving into the earth," dressed in "ectoplasmic garments." Mama can control her clothing, an important aspect for the design and creation of the Mama costume.

The transformation of Mama's short dress into a gigantic spiral of cloth that embraces Mama and Lilly is the grand finale of this costume in the final scene of the movie. Mama is with the children at the edge of the cliff where Edith had jumped to her death with her child in 1887. Lucas and Annabel, with the remains of Edith's baby retrieved from the Clifton Forge Public Records Archive, arrive at the scene to rescue the children from the ghost. In the final moments, the Mama dress changes from being an aged and distressed garment to a long, flowerlike form,

fluttering in the wind. Mama embraces Lilly with the cloth of her growing dress. Mama's dress extends longer and longer to wrap both in a gigantic fabric blossom. The dress becomes "a column, a flower basically made of the Mama dress that was sixteen-feet high," according to Sequeira. Mama changes in this scene from a "decaying skinny woman" into a loving ghost who cares about her children. This love is also symbolized in the transformation of the dress. The ease of the final design of Mama's dress was also influenced by an artefact Sequeira saw in the Alexander McQueen: Savage Beauty exhibition in 2011 at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York: "McQueen had done a beautiful work with silk that was clearly designed to work with the wind, which I knew we were going to be dealing with"(Sequeira, *First Interview with Author, Part 2*). One important aspect of this scene is the "movement" of the Mama dress. Sequeira created the analog concept based on the script, a dress that could make a flowerlike, spiralling movement that forms a cocoon around Mama and Lilly:[10]

> The dress was in a round hoop and it was down, we had fishing line over the lighting rigging and then they turned on the fan and the fabric went up and we guided the fabric out like a flower, and then they reversed it so it came in. So we did that and there are elements of that in the film and then they used that for digital to enhance it. (Sequeira, *First Interview with Author, Part 2*)

The film credits list the visual effects company, MR.X, based in Toronto, New York, and Los Angeles. The MR.X website highlights the company's work on the ghost Mama: "For the early part of the transformation, we shot wire-guided, 300fps cloth elements on blue screen and composited them together to begin the flower-like metamorphosis." For MR.X, Botet's body and performance were central: "We were able to take the inspiration from Botet's real performance and apply it to the Computer-generated imagery (CGI) character, something we never would have achieved with a 100% digital creation."[11] In the end of the film, we see the two girls ultimately separated. Lilly chooses to be with Mama, while Victoria stays with Annabel and

Lucas. Barbara Muschietti talks about how the costume supported this emotional scene: “We wanted to make in the end something really rend [sic] (tear up) and mostly we wanted to be able for Mama to make a cocoon for her and Lilly. This was essential. The best way of doing that, it was the most beautiful way, was doing it through costume” (B. Muschietti). Mama’s costume represents a realm outside of the social order, “the trauma, the great wrong that was done to Mama/Edith” (Jackson 162). The Mama dress itself is a “living” entity guided by the ghost. The dress, like the body of Mama, summarizes her past as “crazy lady,” a marginalized, suppressed mother deprived of her child. The body and the cloth also stand for her power as a ghost. Mama can act outside of given social structures. This marks her as a powerful creature, but her power does not solve the wrongs that were done to her. Her otherness and her traumatic memories are visualized as a decaying texture, which is shown on her body and clothing. The image of decay signifies both the injustice done to her and her powerlessness to break her curse.

The texture on the Mama costume represents an assumption about the character’s transformation to a restless, wandering spirit, and the influence of the body of the actor and technical requirements created by the filmmaker. It is not necessarily a result of her actions on screen. This hypothesis includes the idea that the world inside and outside of the frame gives form to the costume, or as Landis puts it, “Directors ask that the people in the story are real. They want you to believe they are real. You have to believe that everyone in the story has had a life before the movie begins.” The viewer believes that the tattered clothing of the ghost is real and gets the hint that Mama had an existence not depicted in the frame of the film. Oliver Myer interprets this act as diegetic, a permanent negotiation of reverences in the plane of the film and the real world. Diegetic for Myers is the constant alignment of references by the viewer inside and outside of the frame. He defines it as:

> If the imaginary presence of the diegetic is experienced when engaged in the act of viewing a film and it is the mental referent embedded in myth and locked between the subject being in (permanent) transition and the object of desire (which is both the filmed image and the image-in-the-world) then its self-perpetuating culture expands from the frame and the mind simultaneously. (Myer and Nichols 17)

The experience of viewing a film is for Myer an all-inclusive experience, where the gaze created by the filmmaker meets the gaze of the viewer and his imagination of his world. The hypothesis of this diegetic includes assumptions by the filmmakers about the appearance of a female ghost in an American horror film. This is combined with the imagination of the viewer, who is asked to fill the void between what the filmmakers assume the viewers expect to see in a ghost and what the viewers actually see in the dark and tattered clothing of Mama on screen.

The ghost as metaphor and concept is central to the narrative of *Mama*, bringing with it specific notions of history, memory, and trauma in American culture. In contemporary Western literature, ghosts became a significant entity in the late nineteenth century:

> Fashion for ghost stories (developed in Romanticism and the genres of the Gothic and the fantastic) intersected with the effort to unlock other worlds and dimensions—material, psychic, and supernatural—that characterised both spiritualism, in its entanglement with new religious movements, the emergent discipline of psychology, and the professionalization of science in general, and the invention of penetrating yet intangible new media such as telegraphy, photography, and cinema. (Blanco and Peeren 2–3)

The idea that Mama is dressed in tattered and dirty clothes is embedded in a rich history of past and contemporary fictional depictions of ghosts. As a fictive character, the persona Edith turned into the ghost Mama links not only to a specific place in American culture, rural Virginia in the mid-nineteenth century and the early 2010s, but her character also "sheds light on the complexity of memory and trauma, the changing relations between the subject and the collective,

as well as the 'exclusionary, effacing dimensions of social norms pertaining to gender, race, ethnicity, sexuality and class'" (Luckhurst and Morin 2). The clothes of the ghost Mama, based on a nineteenth-century nightgown, which in her time might have signified Edith as an upper-class woman and not necessarily as a patient in a small-town asylum, turn into the cloth of a creature that functions outside of any human-established social norms. Though in the film the clothes of the ghost have the important task of visualizing, and with it characterizing, the creature in opposition to the other persons shown, the question remains as to why Mama wears a tattered and dirty dress. The costume designer Sequeira, and the two textile artists Sacco and Williams, referred to the script as their reference, while Barbara Muschietti, one of the authors of the script, mentioned the physical nature of Mama as the origin of her tattered look. She states that Mama "is a physical ghost. She is not see–through, she can hold, she can harm, so I think with that it makes sense that as she fights and as she weathers, her costumes get more and more perturbed." This idea of a ghost that is somehow bound to the rules of the physical world makes Mama a creature that can not only interfere with the human world, but is also a ghostly figure that humans can interact with and relate to. This idea of interaction in the film leads to the question of how the film viewer recognizes her as a ghost. The question of what ghosts are and what they wear goes back to a lively discussion among scholars in the late nineteenth century, particularly in reference to ghosts appearing in séances and on stage. McCorristine states:

> While ghosts had been associated in the popular mind with the apparel of white linen or deathly shrouds ... it soon became clear that the description of the clothing and appearance of apparitions did not differ from contemporary fashion. ... Clothes and garments represent the living memory of absent people—they function as "material mnemonic" and prove enormously significant in the process of dealing with the death and absence of a loved one.[12]

Memories help to fill in the blanks and create the ghost's attire. What the creature wears lies in the imagination of the beholder, not in the appearance of the apparition. The ghostly "apparition rise[s] into the consciousness of the percipient" (McCorristine 100). People already have ideas about what a ghost looks like before seeing Mama on the screen. The success of Mama's costume is based on the similar imagination of a ghost that the costume-maker and the viewer share. The maker turned the common metaphor of a ghost into a contemporary, symbolic sign the viewer can relate to. The dirt on the Mama dress reflects the assumed physical nature of this fictional otherness but also plays into the public perception of a dark and evil ghost in a Hollywood horror film. The film *Mama* helps to define what a ghost in an American horror film looks like and might be. In a scene at the Clifton Forge Archive, the librarian Louise talks to Dr. Dreyfuss about what a ghost is. Louise describes a spectrum in terms of organic matter and physical deformation but does not explicitly mention clothing: "The elements withered. Desiccated. Twisting it into a distorted figure that's barely recognizable as a human being" (A. Muschietti, *Mama* 00:46:07). Nevertheless, Mama's appearance has a humanistic side, taking care of the children as a "surrogate mother" during their five years of abandonment. Mama is "both a ghost of the past and a shadow of the present" dressed in an old and dirty nightgown (Jackson 163). She does not speak, and indeed cannot communicate through language, but she sings her lullaby to the girls and is able to feel or sense others' emotions.[13]

The two mother figures in the film *Mama* have "elements of fairy tale" (Jackson 145). Annabel, wearing the grunge-styled clothing of a rock musician, becomes a stepmother to Victoria and Lilly. She is depicted as estranged from the idea of taking care of children but nevertheless becomes a protective and loving stepmother. The violent ghost also develops feelings for the two girls she takes care of in the cabin. Mama is not only a manifestation of the wrong done to her but is an entity that remembers its past as a mother, when she gave birth to a

child as Edith. For Jackson, the ghost becomes an "archaic mother as both monster and progenitor" (145). Mama wants to belong to the sphere she once was a part of and re-enacts with Victoria and Lilly her motherly feelings. The costumes of Mama and of Annabel show their displacement from the mother-role they have taken on, and notably both change toward the end of the film to a more neutral attire. The casting of the actor Cheesman, who played Edith, and the inside construction of the Mama dress followed the slender and unusual proportions of the actor Botet's body, while the fabric used for the Mama dress and its artificial texture referenced an assemblage of period and contemporary fashion styles and responded to the technical requirements of the costume while shooting. The fiber quality of the cloth, and its texture and colour change in the process of Mama's transformation from an off-white silk jacquard to a dark brown distressed silk, and finally a digital, pristine interpretation of that darker cloth. The artificial textures on the costumes changed accordingly. The silk jacquard of Edith's nightgown was dyed off-white, while the different versions of the Mama dress become darker and progressively distressed with the metamorphosis of the character. The textures turn from blending in Edith's nightgown in the composite of the frame, to the dirty textures of the Mama dress displaying sartorial opposition and otherness.

The Four Sets of Costumes of the Children, Victoria and Lilly

Dirt or its absence on the children's costumes signifies wealth, the missing social order, the anonymity of social services, and class differences. Similar to the Mama dress, the costumes of the two girls, Victoria and Lilly, mirror their journey from being upper-middle-class girls to orphans displaced by their violent father, Jeffrey, whose death results in them being left in the woods, where they live alone for five years, protected and nurtured by the ghost Mama before they are eventually found. As their clothing changes from pristine to tattered, the children have

multiple costume styles, which adapt to the environmental conditions they play in as well as to the girls' mental states. Victoria is played by two child actresses, Megan Charpentier and Morgan McGarry, who plays the young Victoria. Isabelle Nélisse portrays Lilly, and the younger Lilly is played by Maya and Sierra Dawe. The feral children are eventually found and brought to a psychiatric hospital specializing in childcare, and they later live with their uncle Lucas and his girlfriend, Annabel, in a house provided by the hospital. All this happens in the first fifteen minutes of the film. In the remaining eighty-five minutes, the film shows how Victoria and Lilly try to reintegrate into what the film presents as a typical North American middle-class environment. The children have four different sets of costumes, which show how they change from well-off, to feral, to institutionalized, and finally to foster children. The script does not elaborate when it comes to descriptions of the girls' attire just as it doesn't with Mama's. Only two objects related to their bodies, Lilly's purple blanket and Victoria's glasses, are noted in the script. Both are important objects that foreshadow the girls' connections and attitudes toward the ghostly otherness of Mama. There are some hints in the script—"prosperous house," "quiet street," "Mercedes"—that indicate that they are children from a wealthy family (Muschietti et al. 1). Only when summarizing the adjectives used and objects described in the script does Jackson's labelling of the girls as upper-middle-class become clear (Jackson 145).

In the film, Victoria and Lilly are first shown in clean garments in their nursery. Victoria is about three years old, and her sister, Lilly, is an eighteen-month-old toddler. Victoria is tastefully dressed, ready to go out with her backpack on, in a light brown camel coat with a wine-red toque, a blue dress, a grey cardigan, and white stockings with brown furred suede boots. Later she gets her black-framed glasses handed to her by her father.[14] Lilly wears a white onesie with a light blue floral print, white baby shoes, and is wrapped in a dark purple blanket.

Victoria's costume in the opening scene is status quo. She looks like a young girl from a good family, but her clean dress creates a "mood" or sense that something is out of place. She is standing in the children's room dressed in a coat and toque, wearing a backpack, waiting for her mother to take her to school. The contradiction between what she is wearing and where she is evokes suspense, supported by the off-screen commentaries and the lack of film music in this scene. When her father, Jeffrey, takes her and her little sister, Lilly, away, this "irritation" repeats itself. Now Lilly, dressed only in a jumper and covered by the purple blanket, is significantly less well prepared for the winter weather outside. The clean, good-quality garments the girls are wearing provide a strong contrast for the next scene in the film, when we meet them again. Five years later, the children are feral, living in an abandoned cabin; their clothing, the remains of what they wore when they arrived there, is incredibly shredded and aged. In the script, the "look" of the feral children becomes obvious immediately. The feral children are "semi-naked, squalid, filthy, with matted hair" (Muschietti et al. 16–17). In a short sequence in the film, the two feral children are shown as naturalized in their habitat, an abandoned cabin in the woods. The children look wild and dirty, as Sequeira explains: "The children [are] basically peeling their outer layers and they were found in their thermals, so to speak, or what was left of the thermals" (*First Interview with Author, Part 1*). This scene is interesting, as different ideas of "reality" and cultural norms related to bodily representation and clothing collapse.

The costumes of the feral children symbolize the conjunctions of realistic and technical-ethical approaches. What would happen to clothes worn continuously by small children for five years? Sequeira talks about the difficulty of finding the right balance between a claim to reality and moral considerations. There is a stretch between what is realistic and how much "reality" you can show in a horror film "without being too graphic. The children technically were so young that they did not know about going to the bathroom, for instance. We wanted it to be

gross, but we did not want it to be so gross that it is distasteful." The dirty texture on the feral children's costumes signifies their similarity, abandonment, and closeness to Mama the ghost. An important consideration was figuring out how much of the children's bodies should still be covered with the remaining clothes. One concern was not to sexualize the scene, as Sequeira explains in the interview: "We did a couple of different versions because I think what was envisioned originally was when it became a practical costume it was too much. Especially given the children stand, where they were crouched down, knees up. There was a lot of concern about the crotch area and breasts, etc." (*First Interview with Author, Part 1*). Their growing bodies, lack of hygiene, and inability to take adequate care of themselves is visually summarized in the dirty texture of their costumes. The two young girls go from having individual to uniform clothing styles as feral children. In the scene both girls are seen as one unit covered in dirt, which unites them with Mama. The bewildered children we see rescued are not depicted as children who have lived for years in the wilderness, but rather how the filmmakers wanted the child actresses to be shown as feral children to an expecting audience. This visual narrative was brought together through the research and efforts of different departments of the film team to control what the viewer sees in the hopes of meeting the expectations of the spectator's gaze.

The aim was to find a look for the children that included traces of the abnormal and to link the aesthetics with the look of the ghost Mama, without losing the PG-13 status.[15/16] Barbara Muschietti remembers: "We did a lot of testing, we did a lot of modesty garments and ... we wanted to make the girls comfortable, we did not think they would be comfortable being nude. And we did not think it would be necessary, it was also a PG-13 theme" (B. Muschietti). To find the right balance between reality and fiction also meant certain technical parameters. The costumes had to function in terms of mobility, modesty, and range of movement. One idea was to use "elements of Victoria's costumes on Lilly" (Sequeira, *First Interview with Author, Part 2*).

This idea was dropped when the costumes had to be "tight fitted to the body" to allow the children to walk "like little crabs" (B. Muschietti). The base for the feral costume became the thermals the children were "supposed to be" wearing under their clothing made of "floral printed thermal" fabric that was aged and dyed (Sequeira, *First Interview with Author, Part 2*). To get the right feral look and movement effect, "digital doubles" of the children were created. Barbara Muschietti remembers: "We shot it for real, with them walking like crabs, then we shot it with two very skinny girls ... and then we had them scanned to do digital doubles. The end result is a combination of ... the extremely skinny digital double with Victoria and Lilly's faces" (B. Muschietti). The costumes we see in the film are analog and digital hybrids.

The central question in the process of adding texture to the garments was: how realistic does the texture need to be? "Is there an appetite to see that?" (Sequeira, *First Interview with Author, Part 2*). To create the look of the two "animal children" in the feral costumes, Sequeira did a wide range of image research: "We had images of feral children. We had images of clothing which were left out in the sun. We had some pretty gross images of dead people which were buried or left for dead"(Sequeira, *First Interview with Author, Part 1*). Most of the images in the research binder are portraits of young, grungy, and scratched children, one of them obviously dead. These images do not focus on the clothing but are close-ups of scruffy faces. One image shows a young girl in a filthy tank top and shorts playing in the mud with dirt on her face, her arms and legs bare. This photograph is quite close to the look of the two girls in the cabin. The obvious differences are in the proportions of the bodies; the limbs of the feral children are unnaturally thin and long. There is little to see of the clothing the feral children are wearing in the film images; it blends together with the dirty colour of their skin.

Like the costumes, the texture seen on the costumes is also a hybrid of the analog and digital dirt applied to show the suffering of the feral children. Andy Muschietti's idea that the

girls have to look as though they belong to the ghost Mama raises the possibility of other interpretations of the applied texture. The dramatic system in which the costumes are created not only defines the costumes of the characters but serves equally well to differentiate each character from the others. Costumes can create alignments between characters. The dirt on the skin and the costumes, and the digitally enhanced physiognomy (the extended arms and legs of the girls) can signify the children's alliance with the otherworldly creature. This scene is a turning point for the importance of the clothing in the narrative of the two girls—as feral children, the body was the main focus; in their new costume, clothing takes on a central role.

The Post-Feral Costumes

In the scenes in the psychiatric institution, the script presents the children as "dressed in white hospital gowns." The "clean" institutional clothing neutralizes the dirtiness of the amorphous, feral children's bodies. After their rediscovery, their new clothing signifies them as patients. The children are visually declared to be back in the social order, which, as Jackson emphasizes, "is a hallmark of patriarchal culture, in which both the familial father and larger social forces attempt to tame the child's 'wild' or even 'savage' nature and mold the child into a proper person and citizen" (Jackson 154). The hospital gowns play into this scheme; they are common, provided by a system that rehabilitates them but does not see them as individuals, just as they were not seen as individuals in their feral state. In the film, the texture of these costumes suggests "no emotion." We see different gowns that are white or muted in colour, some showing traces of patterning. Sequeira, who wanted the children to look contemporary, had difficulties finding hospital gowns for children that were not trivialized by stylized animals: "What is available in the real world for that involves teddy bears and ... elements which were to cutzy [sic] for this movie, so we had to create something that a little bit quieter and more settled" (Sequeira, *First*

Interview with Author, Part 2). The final cloth had to be overdyed to create a homogenous look. In the later foster children's costumes, the basic texture that is added, as well as the dyes used, suggests the sad, "no love" look of donated clothing. The texture here is used to suppress the emotions that are by default applied to the garments. Mama and the children wear structurally similar kinds of clothes, garments given to them by anonymous, institutional systems. Clothing functions here as a signifier of indifference. This signification continues when the children arrive at the foster home. In the script, the difference between the girls is shown in the description of their feet: "The girls step out. We see their feet. Victoria wearing her little sneakers, Lilly is barefoot" (Muschietti et al. 35). Victoria's glasses, which show her to be part of the human world, are mentioned. "Victoria with her wide, blinking eyes behind spectacles. She takes Lilly's hand, helps her along. ... Lilly hangs back. Tugs on Victoria's sleeve" (Muschietti et al. 36). This written difference already presages the later separation of the girls, with Victoria staying in the "human" realm, while Lilly becomes "another" like Mama. The image of Lilly holding Victoria's arm became the inspiration for an iconic image of the film advertising, with the twist that in the official movie poster Victoria and her coat are replaced by Mama wearing her dress and Lilly is holding on to Mama's bare wrist.

In the film when Victoria and Lilly arrive in their new foster home, they are shown as sartorially unified, but different from the others (see fig. 1.9). Lilly is barefoot as written in the script, and Victoria wears shoes and glasses, a sign that she is accepting her return to this human realm. The brown coat Victoria is wearing was built in the costume workshop, and for Sequeira its texture mirrors the Mama dress:

> This is where I speak about no love. There is no love for what this was purely purchased for the means of providing the children with something to wear. ... Victoria was having something of a speckle cloth (the coat she is wearing) that

> actually mirrors Mama. In actual fact, if you look at this photo (The scene were Victoria and Lilly arriving at the foster home) you will see the same sort of image in the poster in the Mama dress. [sic] (Sequeira, *First Interview with Author, Part 2*)

The costumes express a neutral if not negative mood; they are "very non-coloured" (Sequeira, *First Interview with Author, Part 1*) without pattern and simple in cut. Lilly is barefoot in this scene, wearing a grey hoody, walking bent beside Victoria, holding and hiding behind her coat sleeve. This pose and her grey sweater are seen again in the official *Mama* poster. The clothing of the foster children in this scene essentially visualizes the dramaturgy of the film's story. Barbara Muschietti says, "It was very important for us to make sure that the divide (between Lilly and Victoria) was made clear." The foster children's costumes show their still-otherworldly presence as post-feral children but also foreshadow their transition and final departure from each other at the end of the film. When the girls move in with their foster parents, Lucas and Annabel, the separation of Victoria and Lilly begins. Lilly's visual appearance and behaviour signal trouble. Victoria, on the other hand, "wants to belong," as Barbara Muschietti explains: "Victoria cares about what she is wearing because she cares about the opinion of others." Victoria's and Lilly's clothing styles start to move apart to signify their differences in mental state. "With Victoria we basically took the iconic little-girl look. She wears a little T-shirt with a cardigan and jeans, where Lilly is wearing literally a top, a bottom, probably no shoes. She had a blanket she was running around with" (B. Muschietti). Later in the film, in a short scene in which Annabel, Victoria, and Lilly visit Lucas in the hospital, their eventual separation becomes obvious by looking at their clothing. This scene is exactly in the middle of the film. For Victoria, who becomes more attached again to the human world, the colour palette of her costume in that scene is "warmed up," while Lilly "remained in essence feral" (Sequeira, *First Interview with Author, Part 1*). Lilly follows an animal-like instinct—"she was so young when

she met Mama, she completely imprinted in Mama's animalistic side"—while Victoria "was older, she already had the influence of adults" (B. Muschietti). The children's feral costumes, which signify their traumatic pasts, are replaced by hospital-style garments made from white and greenish muted-coloured fabrics. Only Victoria's glasses, her connection to the humanized, scientific world, cut this bond with her sister and Mama. In the interview, Sequeira links the texture of Victoria's coat in the scene where she arrives at the foster house with the texture of the Mama dress. The altering of the hospital and foster children's costumes through ageing and dyeing to emphasize "no-love" emotions is a reference to their current trauma as feral children, and the symbolic dirt of being connected to the otherworldly Mama creature. In that sense, the texture of the foster children's clothing is doubly signified: the idea of the costumes build on Edith's costume, suggesting the failure of an institutional power to take care of its patients repeating itself over and over again. The dirt here is the glue that brings Mama's past and the present together, showing the dependency of individuals on state governance. The idea that the state fails in taking care of its citizens is very much in line with the American idea of "do-it-yourself." In this vein, this nuclear patchwork family and the cohesion of its members is the only answer to overcome the trauma that they experienced.

Conclusion: Reading Film Through Costume and Texture

In this chapter, I examined how costumes are developed from script to screen, with particular attention to the artificial texture used on the costumes to signify usage and dirt. My aim was to show how the meaning of the actor's body, the costume, and the artificial texture on the costumes are transformed through the creation process. The few written descriptions of clothing and accessories in the *Mama* script were transformed by the filmmakers, in particular by the costume designer and his crew, into real objects worn by the actors on camera. In *Mama* we

see two generations of females—the children, Victoria and Lilly, and Edith, also known as Mama the ghost—struggling with their fates to accommodate rules imposed upon them. The dirt on their costumes and their bodies indicates that they are outside of the social norms depicted in the film. Bodies and costumes are closely intertwined: the bodily shapes of the four characters change quite dramatically over the course of the movie while negotiating their relationships to dominant social norms, and each transformation is elucidated with corresponding clothing. The clothing always echoes, but never contradicts, the changes at the bodily level. When Edith, in her light-coloured dress, jumps to her death in the lake and her body rots away in the water, the moths signify her transformation into Mama (00:29:27). But this change of physical constitution from human body into "emotion out of shape" (B. Muschietti) does not change the logic of her dress when we see Mama the ghost. The Mama dress is, at least for the most part, a more developed version of the rotting garment in the water. Even though Mama's body changes, the style of the dress stays the same. If we take the words in the script, Mama "dives into the earth," literally, the black-and-brown colour of her dress mirrors the elements she is travelling through.

Besides being truthful to the character, the costumes also had to accomplish other tasks, which are invisible to the viewer. Each costume came in multiples to fit body doubles, stunt performers, and technical equipment needed for the film shoot. In addition, some of the costumes were digitally enhanced, remodelled, or replaced. The feral children were digital doubles with the faces of the girls modelled on top. The 3D model was pushed "to the limits of anatomical-correctness, thinning their limbs and removing fat and "muscle," as described by the visual effects company MR.X. The aim was that the children "were like Mama," as Barbara Muschietti stated in an interview. The arms and fingers of the two feral children look unnaturally long and appear to be growing. Their digital limbs and hands transform physically into copies of Botet's. Mama's dress morphs into a gigantic flowerlike cocoon at the end of the movie. The final

reunion of Mama and Lilly in absolute "love" is expressed in the volume and movement of the garment, but also in its self-renewal. The dress becomes longer and longer, and the fabric rejects its decaying look and turns into a self-healing cloth, which wraps around Mama and Lilly. The dirty texture, which signified the repression of Edith and the lostness of Mama, falls off. In this new, clean, "100% CGI cocoon," both Mama and Lilly finally find their destiny outside of the normative social realm that they had such a hard time adapting to. The artificial dirt on the costumes of Mama and the children is a medium of communication in the film's narrative to build a bridge between these characters across time and enhance the visual experience on a sensorial and cognitive level for the viewer. The film image obscures the process of creating and making the costumes by the different contributors, but this becomes evident when looking at the costume as object. The costumes and their textures on the bodies of the actors or as artefacts on display, as I demonstrate in the final chapter on undershirts, draw attention to the makers of these costumes, and to the interrelation of material decisions and their functionality, expression, and effect on the viewer. As this chapter showed, the same costume styles were made in different material versions to accomplish scene-specific requirements, and different versions of the same costumes were made to fit different bodies. Film is a technically complex creation to achieve the illusion of reality in the film image. Artificial textures as part of this artificial reality are custom-made to communicate specific references. These textures are not bound to historical accuracy but rather are influenced by contemporary taste, creating an imagined past. In the case of the Edith and Mama dresses, the research images, and subsequently the cut, ornament, and silk fabric used, suggest a different social class from the one implied by the dirty texture. Whereas the children's contemporary clothing is closer to their social status, as suggested in the script, the feral costumes were essentially made to show their relation to Mama and cover the bodies so the film would not jeopardize the targeted PG-13 status. The aged and distressed texture on clothing in

the film image combines the joint effort of different players in the costume production and the costume reception of the viewer to identify the authenticity and peculiarity of texture used.

Chapter Two: *The Hunger Games* (2012): From Rags to Riches – The Interpretation of Poverty, Wealth, Dependency and Power through Clothing and Textures

The second case study examines costumes in *The Hunger Games* from 2012, the first installment of the quadrilogy, which depicts the Cinderella-like transformation of the body/character hybrid of Jennifer Lawrence portraying Katniss Everdeen as that character moves from a poorly dressed girl of District 12 to a media-celebrated and richly dressed tribute in the Games of the Capitol. In *The Hunger Games* case study, dirt is a sign of current injustice. Everdeen's grimy clothes visualize the class difference and oppression that she eludes by becoming a tribute of her district. The focus of this case study is how body, clothing, and textures are used to contrast or align the body/character hybrid as part of an ensemble of sets, props, lights, and sounds in the film image. The Hunger Games is a sci-fi book trilogy written by American author Suzanne Collins that includes: *The Hunger Games* (2008), *Catching Fire* (2009), and *Mockingjay* (2010). The Hunger Games film series is an adaption of the book series in four successive parts: *The Hunger Games* (2012), *Catching Fire* (2013), *Mockingjay Part 1* (2014), and *Mockingjay Part 2* (2105). This chapter will analyze *The Hunger Games* (2012) with a focus on the sartorial and bodily changes of the body/character hybrid Jennifer Lawrence and Katniss Everdeen. While the *Mama* chapter looked at the creation process of artificial textures and costumes, this chapter focuses on the interpretation of both in the film image. A teenage girl, Katniss Everdeen, played by Jennifer Lawrence, is the main protagonist of The Hunger Games series. She lives in a near indefinite future in the fictional land of Panem, located in North America. Panem is an autocracy, with one Capitol ruling twelve districts. Each district represents a particular trade and provides the ruling class with certain supplies under the strict governance of the Capitol. District 12 is known for its coal mining. The Hunger Games are an annual toll on

the districts, which revolted against the Capitol in the past. Each year the Capitol chooses tributes in these districts, a "male and female between the ages of twelve and eighteen," at a public "reaping." The tributes fight to the death in the Games. In the first film of the series, Everdeen goes from being a poor young girl, living in destitution in District 12, to becoming the televised tribute of her district, chosen to fight for her life in the Capitol, where the Games take place. In the later films, Everdeen becomes the visual icon of the rebellion against the suppression of the Capitol. Because of her role in *The Hunger Games*, Lawrence has become one of the best-known and highest-paid female Hollywood stars today. The performance of the on-screen hybrid of the character and actor signifies Everdeen as what Lawrence became by portraying her, a media star. While the character's costumes define Everdeen's look, the actor's body fills the fiction with a real-world body. Although her character's clothing is grimy and distressed, the actor's skin looks clean and healthy. "At all times, Everdeen's skin is free of blemishes, her lips naturally red and slightly bee-stung, cheekbones high and usually flushed, hair lustrous and shiny, teeth white and straight" (Dubrofsky and Ryalls 400). The few times "dirt" is seen on Lawrence's body, it is precisely planned and placed makeup. This idea continues in the Capitol when Everdeen's prep team cleans and whitewashes her body with makeup to highlight her female beauty. The first film of the sequel is an example how Hollywood displays female dependency and beauty in a Cinderella-like transformation from rags to riches. In *The Hunger Games* the body of Everdeen is subject to strict control by the ruling power and their henchmen. This dependency is shown throughout in the film by her wardrobe and its textures. The body/character hybrid Lawrence/Everdeen is an excellent instance to analyze the use of textures representing origin, class differences, dependency, conformism, and rebellion on costumes.

In District 12, Everdeen's body is colonized by the Capitol political power, but the influence of that power on her appearance is secondary. The "male" appearance of her body and dress at the beginning of the film reflects the implicit gendering of the harsh living conditions Everdeen is exposed to. When she becomes a tribute, the Capitol has a direct influence, bringing Everdeen's body in line with their ruling standards of femininity. A close analysis of the Lawrence/Everdeen hybrid in this transition speaks about how artificial dirt is used to either separate or align the actor and the character. The forced transitions of Everdeen when becoming the female tribute for District 12 conform her to a Capitol standard gender and class scenario for tributes, while keeping her in economic dependency. Makeup and hairstyles are seen as important signifiers of the Capitol's opposition to Everdeen's "natural" appearance: "Altered bodies—bodies marked as surgically transformed or adorned with makeup and ornate clothing—are constructed as deviant [in the Capitol], in opposition to Everdeen's natural, unaltered white femininity" (Dubrofsky and Ryalls 395). Over the course of the film, Everdeen changes in front of the viewer's eye from "natural, unaltered" to a highly structured "synthetic" (Palmieri) body to fit into the habitat of the Capitol. In the cases of District 12 and the Capitol, the filmmakers reflect on current popular discourses of hygiene, class, race, and gender to define how Lawrence has to be dressed, including their idea of artificial dirt, to visualize a transformation of Everdeen credible to the audience. Palmieri uses the idea of gender fluidity to navigate between the two poles of "natural" and "synthetic" body of the Lawrence/Everdeen hybrid in the film image. Palmieri approaches the idea of body and gender on the level of the film image of the Lawrence/Everdeen hybrid—this includes theoretical ideas of "the power, purpose, use of, abilities of, and containment of women's physical bodies; messages of social constructionism versus biological determinism or naturalism; heteronormativity, heterosexuality, and hegemonic

masculinity; gendered constructions of space and the policing of that space; and expressions of gender fluidity, femininity, and masculinity" (Palmieri 15).

Sources

Scholars have written about Everdeen and *The Hunger Games* from various perspectives. The most common analysis is from the perspective of gender (Guanio-Uluru; Woloshyn et al.) in combination with different views on sexuality (Palmieri), performance and politics (Kirby), class (Byrne; Sullivan) identity (Hansen), and race (Dubrofsky and Ryalls). Some of the articles touch on the idea of clothing and fashion but largely ignore the different textures seen on Everdeen's costumes. Many articles present these changes as the reason for Everdeen's "stardom." Many authors focus on her becoming a celebrity: "Everdeen's makeover, transforming her from a hunter from District Twelve into a glamorous celebrity", without further going into detail about her changes on a bodily level. The focus of these texts is on the Capitol, as the governmental power of Panem, taking possession of Everdeen's body as tribute, turning her into a politicized commodity to maintain its power and use the cultural properties of fashion and entertainment to celebrate this event publicly. Everdeen's change is a physical transformation that includes a change in Lawrence's physique, which raises questions about the term "celebrity" (Byrne; Sullivan; Tan). In an almost ironic double take, a quote from Tan about Everdeen's transformation from an ordinary girl to a televised "star" mirrors Lawrence's experiences becoming the main actor in the film series. "From the moment Everdeen is selected as a tribute she becomes public property. Her body is not her own" (Tan 60). The glamorous costumes of Lawrence/Everdeen reveal the perverted play of dominance by the author, filmmaker, and the fictional Capitol, which turns the hybrid body on screen into a spectacle for the amusement of the audience.

A different theoretical approach concerned with bodily reaction by the viewer of the film uses the ideas of haptic sensations and touch to link the materiality of the film to the body of the spectator. The film image can touch the viewer's body and evoke bodily sensations that draw the viewer into the story. The idea of sensory reaction when watching a film is based on the theory of Laura U. Marks, Laura McMahon, and Lucy Fife Donaldson (Marks; McMahon; Donaldson), who analyze the ideas of haptic sensation[17] and touch[18] (Marks 162; Donaldson 4). The body and mind, as Marks states, "experience touch both on the surface of and inside our bodies." We remember a past touch. The haptic sensation of vision and touch is, when watching a film, reduced to the notion of gaze and memory: "In haptic visuality, the eyes themselves function like organs of touch" (Marks 2). The immateriality of the film image denies the reassurance of physical contact. The different textures of *The Hunger Games* costumes discussed in this chapter evoke and trigger different kinds of memories and reactions. The uses of dirt, hanging threads, and mended holes, as seen in costumes in District 12, evoke the haptic visuality of poverty, while the colourful, shiny, and sparkling finishes of clothing in the Capitol connote the haptic visuality of extravagance, leisure, and wealth. These separations of textures mirror the different geographical places of the film's narrative. In District 12, the dirt on Everdeen's costume plays on visual tropes of a specific time and space in American history: the coal mining fields in the Appalachian Mountains between 1900 and 1950. In *The Hunger Games*, Collins describes the impoverished coal mining District 12 as "a region known as Appalachia."[19] The film shows the district somehow connected to this mountainous and wooded area.

> The Appalachian mountains are a vast region, running from the Deep South all the way up to Nova Scotia before falling off into the ocean, and Everdeen does not specify (yet) which part of that area is District 12. However, since coal is primarily mined in two of the four major regions of Southern Appalachia—the Ridge and Valley section and the Cumberland Plateau—District 12 is likely in one of those areas. (Granger)

The use of Appalachia as a "historical backdrop" for the visualization of District 12 was criticized by Hardy (2010) and Hanlon (2012) (Pharr and Clark 61). Appalachia has become a stereotype of a cultural region known in American history for being "poor, backward, and white" (Baird). Judianna Makovsky, the costume designer of *The Hunger Games*, explains the use of Appalachian images in her design process: "We looked at a lot of photographs of coal mining districts from the turn of the century to the 1950s because we wanted it to have a very American feel—it is a real place—it could be Appalachia, you know, a hundred or fifty years ago" (Churchill). Makovsky's suggestion that "it could be" might be a hint as to why the depiction of rural Appalachian life has been criticized. A simple Google image search shows how closely the costumes in the film portrayed people of Appalachia in the first half of the twentieth century. After locating the look of the costumes in a specific time and place in the American hinterland, Makovsky continues in a different interview to talk about the texture of the clothing:

> I envisioned a District that was stuck in a time warp and forgotten about, that hadn't seen the advances that privilege could bring you. District 12 wasn't an area where they were worried about TV and other things, but instead they were simply trying to survive. The luxury of color was not something of importance for these people as they simply worried about working hard enough to put food on the table and often falling short at even that. Therefore, the grays and faded blue gave that hard working feel to the citizens of District 12 as they toiled in the mines. (Churchill)

In the establishing shots of District 12, the background actors depicting different aspects of the district's "everyday life." The style and cut of these costumes define male, female, and children's leisure and workwear. Men wear shirts and pants, and occasionally work jackets, smocks, or black mineworker outfits with hard hats. Women are shown wearing dresses with cardigans and aprons on top. Children are, depending on their gender, dressed similarly to the adults. All of

these costumes show, in different stages, the textures of "wear and tear" and everyday usage, the "dirt" of manual labour, and the distress of poverty.

The distressed and "dirty" costumes of District 12 are in make, cut, material, and style close to photographs taken by the U.S. government's Farm Security Administration (FSA) photographers during the Great Depression in the late 1930s such as, for example, "Migrant Mother (Florence Owens Thompson)," photographed by Dorothea Lange in 1936 (see fig. 2.1). By examining the costumes of the lead and background actors carefully, it is possible to find a contrast in the textures on these different costumes. The dirt and distress of Everdeen's hunting outfit is more defined than on the clothing of the background actors; their costumes look more aged and broken down. The differences in textures on the background costumes can be attributed to their "purely visual function" (Hollander 238). Background actors are usually seen for only a short period in a film, and the costumes need to deliver their message within this time frame. The background actors serve the important role of setting the tone of District 12 early in the film. The clothing style in District 12 is not subject to fashion. Makovsky continues, "American workwear hasn't changed in 150 years. So we wanted to keep that timeless feeling with a lot of classic, simple clothes." The distressed and dirty textures on the clothes in District 12 are, for the costume designer, a sign of working-class poverty, but also a sign of the stability of style at a particular location and time: "The population, or the class to which the costume in question belongs, is relatively homogeneous, stable, and immobile" (Veblen 81). The same is true for the dirt shown on their clothing. The dirty texture of workwear and the clothing of the poor in real life have a visual consistency. There is a distinction between dirty clothing showing devastation and that signifying workwear. In District 12 these two different kinds of dirt on clothing become apparent: textures simulate mineral "dirt"—like soil—or distress, like scuffed surfaces, holes, and grimy edges. Thus "dirt" can signify labour, sickness, devastation, death, and poverty. It may

signify also the working body, with "ordinary, everyday dirt," which is not a sign of danger and poorness, but of the manual work itself (Masquelier 192). "Dirt" can represent danger in the sense of lack of hygiene or illness, as in the short scene at the beginning of the film where an old man gnaws bones with his dirty hands (00:03:20). The lack of agency implied in the dirty and lethargic-looking people of District 12 in the opening scene of the film suggests a life based on devastation, dependency, mental or physical illness, and poverty. Collins describes the characters in this scene through Everdeen's voice in the book as "many who have long since stopped trying to scrub the coal dust out of their broken nails, the lines of their sunken faces" (Collins 5). The people of District 12, trapped in a cycle of poverty, do not have the resources or the will to clean themselves. The wear and tear on their clothing and bodies sum up poverty, manual labour, and a lack of hygiene, but also the passing of time as these clothes have been in use for a very long time. As the story will tell, the people of District 12 are dependent on a corrupt regime, and their dirty clothes are the sign of this authority. Collins simplifies and sums up the different ways to get dirty in District 12 in the words "coal dust," which do not represent the potent commodity the district is known for, but the dangerous trace of this compressed energy. Being covered in "coal dust" implies a lack of self-care and suggests health at risk. These traces of health-threatening dirt are missing on the costumes at the reaping; and are replaced by signs of usage, wear and tear. As the film will show, coal dust, a sign of poverty, turns into fire, and burning coal is a sign of resistance of the autocracy of the Capitol. In Panem, "dirt" on clothes is seen as something to avoid in public because it signifies poor self-care, manual labour, or poverty, but what is seen as dirt differs between the districts and the Capitol. Dirt is what the ruling Capitol is expecting to see when looking at people from District 12 at the televised reaping. However, the people of District 12 make a joint effort to wear clean clothes at this event organized by the Capitol to select tributes for the Hunger Games. Their clean clothes suggest "normality" to the other

districts and the ruling Capitol, though not to themselves. In the reaping scene, the shift from "social to public" happens; everyone attending this public event is dressed in his or her "Sunday best." The District 12 reaping costumes are not spotless; they are immersed in psychological and physical matter, displaying personal memories and wear and tear.[20] The filmmakers display the clothed bodies of District 12 as a hybrid of the district's efforts to show normality through cleanliness. The reaping costumes display an acceptable version of purity in the realm of District 12. while the spotless white Peacekeeper uniforms of the Capitol police forces, and the magenta dress of Effie Trinket indicate superiority. The filmmaker's effort to show impurity and with it dependency through the signs of wear and tear on clothing seen in District 12 reflects on an idea of purity as a social and political construction. The moviegoer slips into the role of the Capitol spectator watching the reaping on screen, understanding the District version of purity as secondary and dependent on the Capitol's supremacy. The attempt of the people from District 12 to show normality through cleanliness fails in the eye of the observer.

The Hybrid

Another take on the bias of cleanliness is the body/character hybrid Lawrence and Everdeen. The body of the actress stays mostly flawless, in contrast to the obvious transformation from "rags to riches" of the character Everdeen costumes. The hybrid body/character displays the transformation of body and clothing from private and dirty to public and pristine sphere. The alienation Everdeen expresses in the film turning into a public figure, resonates with the experiences Lawrence had when becoming a Hollywood film star herself while filming the first sequel of *The Hunger Games*. The actor remembers:

> It's funny how Everdeen and I follow the same path. I had to go to parties or appear on red carpets, wear couture gowns, and I did not feel like myself. I felt like an alien. That is what Everdeen experiences in the first volume of *The*

> *Hunger Games*. She becomes aware that she must learn to communicate with this new entourage, to wear certain clothes.... (Lawrence)

The comment of Lawrence, comparing her emerging public role with the fictional character Everdeen she played, focuses on the idea of social pressure on Everdeen to fulfill her public portrayal as Tribute of District 12 in the Capitol. The character is forced to learn the rules of behaviour and representation of the Capitol upper class, like Lawrence did voluntarily as she responded to her new role as emerging Hollywood star. The film costumes generated onto this special actor body have the task to display its particularity and the imagined world and personality of the character Everdeen. The crossing of iconized body, text, and object into an body/character hybrid on screen enhances the presence of the individual parts as artefacts. The public side of the actor's body changes into a precious commodity in need of being kept exceptional. The display of beauty is an important part of this construction and seems to stay in contrast to the textual description of the character, as Palmieri remarks:

> This film series not only privileges Lawrence's effortless and normative beauty—her height, build, weight, hair color, eye color, and skin color—as ideally beautiful and ideally feminine, it also sexualizes her through this continuous and seemingly effortless beauty. Instead of a warrior, Everdeen is distilled down to a beautiful object, perpetually on show for both Capitol audiences and theater goers. (Palmieri 145–146)

The body of the actor, in contrast to her District 12 costumes, gets marked with dirty textures only in specific moments of the film. Rarely is the dirt of District 12 seen on Lawrence's face, hands, and hair. This scheme continues when Everdeen becomes a tribute and is brought to the Capitol. Through the costume style changes, Lawrence's body continues to display, as Palmieri remarks, "effortless and normative beauty." When she is televised in the Capitol, only her makeup and hairstyles change significantly. Her persistent clean look and the precise use of

different textures on Lawrence's body reflect the self-consciousness of the Hollywood film industry, in which an actor is a precious commodity and her image has to be balanced between the demand to give the character authenticity within the story, and making the character recognizable as a "star." Though her character is at odds with her attractive self, it is obvious that Lawrence was also chosen because of what is perceived as "natural beauty." The shift from dirty to clean clothes and body of the Lawrence/Everdeen hybrid is also defined by a visual change towards feminine aspects of Lawrence's body.

This shift is summarized in the term "gender fluidity" (Palmieri 107). Palmieri defines gender fluidity as not based on a link between physical bodies and gender but on a reinterpretation of gender normative significations: "This deconstruction of the gender-body link allows any man or woman to be masculine or feminine and allows for any individual to be both masculine and feminine simultaneously" (Palmieri 107). The dirty girl with "male-like" attitudes in District 12 becomes a clean, feminized version of herself in the Capitol. This transformation is initiated by Everdeen cleaning herself, washing off the dirt of District 12, and this ritual continues with her being forcefully cleaned in the Capitol. Everdeen's more masculine preference at the beginning of the movie, as discussed below, shifts to a more feminine identity later in the film. The choice of costume and texture for Everdeen demonstrates this gender change visually. Clothing and texture have two specific functions in this transformation: they signify a shift in her character, and they function as mediators between character and actor.

Everdeen's Dirty Costumes, Gender Fluidity, and the Cleaning of Her Body in District 12

The costumes of the body/character hybrid can be examined on three levels. First is *private-domestic* as seen with her first outfit, a used-looking nightgown made of blue and off-white pinstriped

coarse cotton. Second is *public-domestic* with her second and third attire, the hunting outfit and reaping dress. The hunting clothing is made up of distressed, striped brown-beige pants and a well-used dark brown long-sleeved henley shirt; scuffed light brown lace-up hunting boots; her father's old brown leather jacket with grimy pockets; and a dark brown belt with a square brass buckle (see figs. 2.2.1, 2.2.2, 2.2.3). Her reaping dress is a blue dress handed down from her mother with matching shoes (see figs. 2.3.1, 2.3.2). Lastly, are the *foreign-spectacle* costume styles that Everdeen wears in the Capitol and the arena. Both of her domestic outfits are strongly influenced by her parents. The mother figure is drawn as weak and not able to cope with taking care of her two daughters after her husband's sudden death. In opposition, the missing father figure becomes the dominant formatting model for Everdeen. In both cases the parent–daughter relationship is symbolized through clothing and Everdeen's memories. This personal view becomes highly symbolic when shared with the audience and can be read black-and-white as the weak mother figure and the strong father figure. Most scholars elaborate about this dynamic. One turning point, which sees Everdeen's mother in a different light, is when the braided hair her mother did for Everdeen's reaping outfit becomes in the Capitol and throughout Panem a symbol for resistance. The supposed weakness of the mother turns, through her handwork on her daughter's hair, into the symbol of resistance and sheds a different light on the idea of female weakness.

The costume we see Everdeen in first, a worn-looking nightgown made of white-blue fabric, has a washed-out look and yellowish-brown stains. Everdeen wears the costume in one of the most private moments of the film, while comforting her sister, Prim, on the morning of the reaping in their bedroom. The material's surface looks used. Damage is shown in the form of holes and hanging threads along the edges, and larger areas of distress have been mended. Everdeen's first *public-domestic* outfit includes her father's leather jacket. He died in a mining accident when Everdeen was eleven. Everdeen remembers in the book version: "My father knew and he taught me some before he was blown to bits in

a mine explosion. There was nothing even to bury. I was eleven then" (Collins 6). The figure of her father stands for responsibility and lawlessness, fighting for independence from the dominant power of the Capitol by not following the imposed rules when hunting in the woods. The "dirty" texture on Everdeen's masculine-looking clothing is a sign of personal memories, the inequality and injustice of the Panem political system, and resistance against the ruling Capitol.

As a result of her husband's sudden death, Everdeen's mother experienced a psychotic episode and became unable to support the family. The hunting outfit and the distressed and dirty texture are important as vessels of memories for Everdeen in the book. She remembers how her father taught her to hunt and, although it is illegal in District 12, hunting is Everdeen's main source of income in the absence of her father. Everdeen takes over the role of her late father and becomes the breadwinner of her family, hunting and selling prey for food. Indeed, the missing father figure plays an important role in Everdeen wearing pants. The dirty hunting outfit is seen as especially important for the character, as it identifies how Everdeen cross-dresses from being marked as an ordinary girl who is part of her community, to be the only woman in District 12 dressed in male attire.

> Despite allusions to her long, dark braid—a seemingly feminine trait—Katniss's other gendered markers are primarily masculine. Her hunting boots, hidden bow and arrow, and personal relationship with the woods draw a significantly manlier portrait of Katniss. Indeed, all aspects of Katniss's life involve a blurring of gender boundaries. As a hunter, Katniss is a predator in the woods, following in her father's footsteps and adopting the traditionally masculine approach to the hunt. In fact, the earliest descriptions of Katniss reference her father and his legacy countless times, drawing herself into a male lineage. Using the lessons that her father taught her and rejecting what she perceives as incompetence in her mother—Katniss is able to provide for and maintain her family. (Mitchell 20)

Everdeen's ambiguous gender changes in relation to her lifestyle and attire is the focus of some scholars. The idea of visualizing gender preferences by wearing garments connoted to the opposite gender—Everdeen wears pants and her father's leather jacket at the beginning of the film—has shifted in recent scholarly work from an object-focused interpretation, like cross-dressing, to a bodily level: "Everdeen's gender fluidity is dictated by her experiences, social interactions, and the culture of District 12. In District 12, she is both the provider and caretaker of her family, hunting and killing as well as mothering Prim" (Palmieri 110). Everdeen is the only woman shown wearing pants in District 12. Byrne suggests practical reasons:

> These clothes are presented as "practical" and suitable for hunting, eliding the fact that they are powerfully gendered. ... Her clothes both reflect and help to create this identity. They also foreshadow the masculine leadership role she will adopt as the Hunger Games unfolds into an uprising against the Capitol. (Byrne 49)

This literal interpretation of "who wears the pants has the power" underlines the symbolic meaning clothing has when turned into an icon on screen but does not mark Everdeen as a masculinized leader. Her taking on the role of breadwinner influences her style of dress and how she reacts to certain pieces of clothing: "Everdeen's rejection of traditional femininity indicates that she believes that the traits she chose or inherited from her father mark her as different than her mother and sister" (Hansen 164). Dirt is an important signifier of this "maleness" of Everdeen, as cleanliness will become a signifier for her "femaleness." The "gender split" of Everdeen follows a common division between sexes on the level of objects, not the body. Dressing in different styles of pants and skirts marked with changing textures of dirt or embellishment, Everdeen is crossing the symbols of male and female fashion. As Byrne states, "the most obvious gendered split in Western dress is the divide between trousers for men and skirts for women" (48) and with that on the level of the object worn. The term "gender shift" in

context with clothing blurs the line between object and body. Everdeen does not shift her gender by cross-dressing; she shifts the reception of it and her social position. On a bodily level, like in the two cleaning scenes of Everdeen, artificial dirt and body hair are strong signifiers of belonging to a perceived social or economic status, and with her rise from breadwinner to representative of her district, the film focuses on showing Everdeen's, and with it Lawrence's, female features by concentration on cleanliness and beauty.

After the hunting scene Everdeen comes home to take a bath. In the book, this scene is described in the first person: "I scrub off the dirt and sweat from the woods and even wash my hair" (Collins 15). These words suggest a greasy and dirty bodily appearance, but if one examines Everdeen at the end of the hunting scene, there is no dirt on her face and only a residue of dirt under her nails (see scenes 04:46 and 07:29). Stylistically, this scene adds to the first scene of the film, where Everdeen is with Prim. The camera is subjectively close, without presenting the entirety of her body, and the images have a low depth of focus, concentrating essentially on her limbs and face. In the nine-second sequence, in which Everdeen is alone in the tub, scrubbing her dirty feet and hands and pouring water over her hair and face, there are no additional sounds or music, only the sounds of Everdeen cleaning herself. How the scene is filmed and edited suggests that taking a bath is a regular activity, but on the day of the reaping it is a necessary annoyance. The length of the scene and the rapid cut of the sequence suggest urgency. The focus on "natural" sounds and Everdeen scrubbing her feet and brushing her fingernails symbolizes manual work. All dirt shown in this scene suggests external matter; the dirt on her feet resembles a dark, soil-like matter. The idea of bodily matter, like perspiration, is absent. To clean oneself helps to transition from private to public. As Terence Turner notes, "cleanliness, as the removal of all 'natural' excrescence from the surface of the body, is thus the essential first step in 'socialising' the interface between self and society, embodied in concrete

terms by the skin." Washing off the soil of the wood and sweat of her body, Everdeen resets herself from being different and becomes a valid member of her community. Dressed in the used gown of her mother, Everdeen can visually join the female population of District 12 at a state-ordered public event to select the male and female tributes of her district.

Everdeen's Clean Reaping Costume

After the bath scene, wet hair frames Everdeen's face and her bare shoulders, which suggests nudity and supports the impression of purity. Everdeen is standing in front of her bed, looking at her second *public-domestic* outfit, a light blue dress. "To my surprise, my mother has laid out one of her own lovely dresses for me. A soft blue thing with matching shoes" (Collins 15). Now cleaned and freshly dressed, Everdeen can attend the public reaping. With this costume, Everdeen leaves her private realm and starts wearing clothing that will signify her as female in a public-domestic domain and reintegrate her into social norms of her gender. Everdeen is only able to wear this dress after she cleans her body of the "dirt" from hunting, which represents her "male" side. The dirt on her body, hunting outfit, and leather jacket are symbols of resistance against the ruling power. When Everdeen removes her clothes and cleans her body, the idea of dirt and its connotations transforms, and Everdeen is stripped of her "male" side. Her mother's clean and used dress binds Everdeen to a specific space and time through memory. The dress symbolizes her mother's weakness after her husband's sudden death. By wearing that dress, Everdeen puts on a garment immersed in memories she rejects and signifies herself in traditional female attire. Her costumes suggest gender fluidity between male and female clothing styles, but the body and gender of Lawrence remain unchanged; the actor's body is always female. A close-up on her flawless face suggests cleanliness but comparing the look of her face throughout the film reveals an always similarly clean actor. The actor Lawrence is

visible and fills the character Everdeen and her clothing; while Everdeen's cross-dressing connotes gender, social, and class shifts, the actor Lawrence suggests female Hollywood stars' beauty. Everdeen's blue dress and the clothing of all the other people of District 12 attending the reaping signal a public message to their own district, the remaining districts of Panem, and the Capitol. Despite the hardships of everyday life, the people of District 12 are a functioning social unit, and cleanliness is a sign of their beliefs. Cleanliness "emphasizes the abilities of people to shift themselves socially" (Masquelier 192). But the equality of clean bodies and clothes in District 12 is misleading. The county itself is divided between a well-off ruling class and poor ordinary people. This detail becomes evident reading the book, where in a short scene Everdeen meets with Madge, the daughter of the district's major: "Today [Madge's] drab school outfit has been replaced by an expensive white dress. ... Reaping clothes" (Collins 11). Madge wears a special dress, as Everdeen does, for the reaping, but Everdeen cannot afford the luxury of a new outfit. Everdeen belongs to the poor people of District 12. The dress she wears is clean, but the stain of poverty is still present.

The cut, colour, and fabric of Everdeen's blue dress stands out among the clothing worn by the other women and girls attending the reaping. The dress's specific colour and how the scene was filmed put Everdeen's energetic and unyielding character as the natural and desirable body of the actor Lawrence in the centre of the picture frame. This is not a surprising detail, as Lawrence is the lead actor in this film, but that the dress stands out underlines how meticulously this dress was planned to perfectly fit the actor's body, suit the character, and fit into the colour scheme of the scene. The costume designer of *The Hunger Games,* Makovsky, states in an interview with the *Los Angeles Times*:

> We made dozens of different versions, some sheer, some not. Originally we thought it would be cotton, but rayon looked better. We found the fabric at the

> Western Costume fabric shop. And we bleached and dyed it to get just the right blue, and put some smocking at the top. (Makovsky)

The finely patterned blue dress works perfectly with Lawrence's hair and skin tone. The cut of her dress has a vintage feel but does not show over-articulated details from post-WWII American fashion as some dresses worn by the background actors do in this scene. Everdeen's dress looks like a contemporary version of a period dress. It is designed to trigger the illusion of a specific vintage period, without alarming the viewer's eye. It needs what Edward Maeder called "the stamp of the time":

> Every era creates an image of history marked with a contemporary stamp. The view of the past is always influenced by present values. ... The makers of ... period films shape popular ideas about what life was like in earlier times more than any other chroniclers, be they painters, novelists, or historians. Creating a celluloid vision of the past is an elaborate undertaking, and the costume designer plays a critical role in contributing to a film's historical ambience. The designer's job requires knowledge of earlier clothing styles as well as imagination and ingenuity to revive past fashions in an entertaining and convincing form. Although a high degree of historical accuracy may be achieved, aspects of the contemporary aesthetic—the stamp of the time—inevitably are included and in fact are necessary if costumes are to appeal to the audience. (Maeder)

After Everdeen is chosen to perform in the Hunger Games, she gets rid of the garment she wore at the reaping like an old skin: "I peel off my mother's blue dress" (Collins 42). The "human imprint" of her mother's body clings to this dress and holds Everdeen captive (Stallybrass 37). The dress as object represents the failures of her mother not taking care of her children after their father died. By giving the dress to Everdeen, both share an artefact soaked with mutual memories. The dress, which represents her mother, takes possession of Everdeen's body when she wears it, like her father's leather jacket did before. A used garment has the power

to symbolize the body of its predecessor, while taking possession of the new body wearing it. While her father's jacket symbolizes a strong masculinity, her mother's dress symbolizes weak femininity. The dress becomes for Everdeen a double-folded burden; for her it represents her mother's female weakness, and it displays her for the Capitol's audience in the media as a young woman dressed in outdated, old clothes, depicting the devastation of District 12. Everdeen is very well aware of what "representation" means once chosen as a tribute, and she rejects her mother's dress. Everdeen knows from having seen earlier Hunger Games on television that each tribute will be given garments in the style of the Capitol to wear, and she is prepared for this change. The clothing of her father and mother signify Everdeen's gender fluidity and the idea of clothing as a vessel of personal memories known only to her and the viewer of the film, and are distinguished from the foreign fashion of the Capitol, a vessel of public spectacle. The main difference between the fashion items that Everdeen wears at the Capitol and her parents' clothing is—besides cut, style, and material—that the Capitol fashion does not contain personalized memories. This ahistoricity of the items for Everdeen and the audience show a shift of perspective on the sartorial matter in *The Hunger Games*. The gaze of the moviegoer on Everdeen in District 12 is a knowing one. Everdeen as oppressed and poor girl is dressed in dirty, 1950s American–stylized clothing. The audience is presented a familiar tableau of post-WWII America, which they can relate to, and, more important, have a distance from. This distance from a character dressed in dirty, shabby clothes links the audience's gaze with the assumed apathetic gaze of the people in the Capitol on District 12. This view changes when Everdeen dresses in the fashion of the Capitol. Fashion in general sums and represents the zeitgeist of a specific cultural plane at a specific time and place, to signify and trigger specific cultural memories on a highly abstracted and symbolized level. The audience switches into an Everdeen-like novice gaze when seeing these Capitol clothing styles; they look futuristic, somehow unfamiliar, but represent a

common idea of decadent clothing styles. The reception of dirt and cleanliness in clothing is shown as culturally specific, but also as a political tool to create difference. Only the poor districts can look dirty in the eyes of those who are causing the dirt, the dominant Capitol. The cleanliness of the Capitol is not a hygienic necessity but an obsessive pattern of difference. Their clean and spectacular fashions are a neurotic necessity to maintain the artificial differences created by the ruling Capitol.

The Cleaning of Everdeen in the Capitol

Everdeen, even in cleaning herself, is not capable of transforming her body into what the Capitol accepts as the norm. In becoming a tribute, Everdeen enters a sphere where she has to wear *foreign-spectacle* costume styles, master new and contradictory skill sets, and learn to act strategically towards people who want to see her killed but have the power to prolong her life and to kill the other tributes. She has to learn, understand, and embrace how to wear and use the Capitol fashion given to her to present herself in public. As Beverly Skeggs states in accordance with Veblen's theory of the leisure class, Everdeen learns that "requisite knowledge is not only about knowing a set of rules but also possessing the logic in order to reproduce them" (136). To enhance their chance of survival in the Games each participant has to find "sponsors," wealthy people of the Capitol sending goods the tributes need to survive in the "arena." In the book Everdeen remarks, "If no one sponsors me, my odds of staying alive decrease to almost zero" (Collins 105). The superior fashion and bodies of the Capitol represent the "right culture," and being attractive in Capitol terms brings Everdeen benefits in the arena that she needs to survive. The bodily changes and outfits the Capitol demands of the tributes possess the logic of transforming their foreign bodies into symbols accepted by the people in power. When Everdeen arrives in the Capitol, a team of makeup and hair artists under the supervision of a fashion stylist,

the “prep team,” is ready to change Everdeen’s body into that “desired” object. Before Everdeen can see the Capitol stylist, who invents her fashionable wardrobe as a tribute of District 12, she is meticulously cleaned in what the book refers to as the “Remake Center.” The cleaning scene takes place in a sterile-looking environment; for each tribute a cleaning compartment with table and equipment is set up. In the film, there is no clear gender division; a boy is shown in the box beside Everdeen. All “foreign” bodies are cleaned and stripped of their bodily “dirt.” Bodily hair removal is a particular effort in this process, except for Everdeen’s hairstyle, which stays untouched, the one-sided braid becoming a key part of her “look” and later a hairstyle of the female resistance. Three short quotes from the book show how Collins deals with Everdeen’s hair in the book: [1] “My hands go to my hairdo, the one area of my body my prep team had been told to leave alone. My fingers stroke the silky braids my mother so carefully arranged” (Collins 63); [2] “‘Who did your hair?’ ‘My mother,’ I say. ‘It’s beautiful. Classic really. And in almost perfect balance with your profile. She has very clever fingers,’ he says” (Collins 64); [3] “My face is relatively clear of makeup, just a bit of highlighting here and there. My hair has been brushed out and then braided down my back in my usual style. ‘I want the audience to recognize you when you’re in the arena,’ says Cinna dreamily. ‘Everdeen, the girl who was on fire.’” (Collins 67). The cleaning scene in the Capitol differs from Everdeen’s bathing scene in District 12 in its use of camera, light, and costume. The camera is less subjective: in the previous bath scene, the camera was closer to Everdeen’s nude body, but no complete shot of her body was shown. Everdeen was in control over every act of cleaning her body. In the cleaning scene in the Capitol, she loses this independence, and in the harsh light, Everdeen’s covered body is worked over by two female and one male employees of the Capitol. In the book, Everdeen describes the different steps of this process: the workers “scrubbing down my body with a gritty loam that has removed not only dirt but at least three layers of skin, turning my nails into uniform shapes, and

primarily, ridding my body of hair" (Collins 61). The cleaning allows Everdeen to become part of the Capitol's social sphere and its idea of beauty, as Turner claims:

> The removal of facial and bodily hair carries out this same fundamental principle of transforming the skin from a mere "natural" envelope of the physical body into a sort of social filter, able to contain within a social form the biological forces and libidinal energies that lie beneath. (488)

As the cleaned body becomes regulated according to the dominant cultural norms, it also becomes capable of belonging to the dominant social form. "Fashionable behaviour is never simply a question of creativity or self-expression; it is also a mark of colonization, the 'anchoring' of our bodies, particularly the body of women, into specific positions, and parts of the body in the line of the gaze" (Sawchuck 51). In obvious opposition to the clothing seen in the districts, the fashion of the Capitol is pristine and superficial, and it displays the wealth of its members: "The wearer can afford to consume freely and uneconomically [and] is not engaged in any kind of productive labor" (Veblen 78). This idea visualizes the central bias against the oppressed districts. "Dirt" on clothing is used to show labour as an important signifier for the non-Capitol parts of Panem, while the leisure body differs from the productive body by wearing "neat and spotless garments" (Veblen 58). The main reason for the colourful and pristine fashion in the Capitol is to show the class differences of the dependent districts. The social norms of the Capitol alter Everdeen's body and attire and enhance and symbolize certain aspects unique to her female gender. By doing so the two sides of the hybrid come closer together. The alienation shown by the character when turning into a public figure collapses with the experiences of Lawrence becoming a Hollywood movie star by playing Everdeen. The cleanliness of body and costume, and how it is seen in the gaze of the film viewer, connote attraction. Using Laura

Mulvey's gaze theory, it can be said that the pleasure in looking at Everdeen is dominated by the active gaze of the Capitol's people projecting their fantasies of ordinance and cleanliness onto the female form, which is styled accordingly (Mulvey 8). Within the established power relations in Panem, the Capitol uses its control to keep the inhabitants of the twelve districts in a subordinate position; they are simultaneously looked at and displayed to entertain audiences both at the annual Hunger Games and, outside of the film's narrative, people watching in a cinema. Just as dirt ensures the viewer that Panem is governed by a corrupt regime, cleanliness and fashion on the body of Everdeen signify the arbitrariness of the ruling Capitol. The body of Everdeen has to change as it becomes subject to the gaze of the Capitol. This "changeover" is not a reinvention of herself by others, but an adjustment to the viewing habits of others. Only after this transformation can Everdeen be shown as an official tribute of District 12 and wear the particular outfits created for her body. Besides new makeup and dress, Everdeen must also learn how to behave and act in this new environment. From her days in District 12, Everdeen is used to appearing emotionless, to maintaining a facade of strength. This behaviour helps her in the Capitol, but while it is only implied in the film, the book is more explicit in revealing the amount of coaching the tributes receive from their team in order to perform well in public appearances. This teaching involves learning how to wear and use her new outfits properly to convince the audience:

> We go to my rooms and she puts me in a full-length gown and high-heeled shoes, not the ones I'll be wearing for the actual interview, and instructs me on walking. The shoes are the worst part. I've never worn high heels and can't get used to essentially wobbling around on the balls of my feet. But Effie runs around in them full-time, and I'm determined that if she can do it, so can I. The dress poses another problem. It keeps tangling around my shoes so, of course, I hitch it up, and then Effie swoops down on me like a hawk, smacking my hands and yelling, "Not above the ankle!" (Collins 115)

This education, in nineteenth-century governess style, in how a foreign body should conduct itself properly in front of the watching audience of the ruling class reminds the reader of the common construction of social behavior and how powerful self-discipline is in determining identity. In the domestic realm of District 12, Everdeen's dirty clothing is commissioned to support the act of taking care of her family and representing herself in front of other citizens of her district. In the Capitol, in contrast, the clean, spectacular fashion she wears as tribute modulates Everdeen into an identity that iconizes her as the girl of District 12 and symbolizes the Capitol's dominant power. Everdeen's body is visually a "colonised body," as Palmieri states:

> The tributes' bodies, which are made doll-like and disposable, are symbols of the Capitol's power, brutality, and of its larger desire to control and confine its district subjects; their bodies serve as markers of political hierarchy, demonstrating how little power the people have in contrast to the Capitol. (102)

The Capitol defines the district's tributes as boys or girls between the ages of twelve and eighteen. This selection does not imply specific personal qualifications. All tributes have in common is that they are defined and marked by their lack of means; they become nurtured and evaluated, and their physical bodies and dress change to turn them into a televised spectacle in the Capitol. Immersing tributes in luxury, visible for everyone on television, elevates them to a level of alienation and separates them from their home districts. The Capitol is not interested in the actual self of the tribute, but in their performances in front of the camera. The people of Panem looking at Everdeen know that this newly cleaned and dressed body has a very specific task to fulfill. Vice versa, Everdeen knows that surviving in the Hunger Games is a masquerade. She is a good servant to the Capitol game-makers, who know how to please and manipulate the people of Panem who watch her. While the clothing of her parents enhances or hinders her

capabilities on the social level of her district, the Capitol fashion items make it possible for Everdeen to gain popularity as an image within the political system of Panem. The hunting outfit made it possible for her to leave the legal realm of District 12 to provide food to her family and be the breadwinner. Her mother's dress put her back in the official legal system and gender norms imposed by the Capitol in District 12. The clothing provided by the Capitol for Everdeen as tribute of her district makes her a public figure and icon representing District 12, while the dirty, male clothing connotes self-determination; with every cleaning process her costumes suggest tighter social control, discipline, and bondage.

The Girl on Fire—The Black and Red Capitol Dresses

The clothing of the Capitol fulfills only part of the common definition of fashion; it is not fashion in the sense of change but spectacular style. The costumes Everdeen wears in the Capitol are intended to impress on camera, and this in a double sense: to affect the viewers of the film and the viewers of the Hunger Games in Panem. In this section I will look at two costumes Everdeen wears in the Capitol before fighting in the arena: the black dress of the opening ceremony and the red dress of the "televised interview" (Collins 112). Both dresses have a special feature, which shows Everdeen in flames. These artificially inflamed costumes become a metaphor for Everdeen, the "girl on fire." The Capitol fashion, the elaborate form-fitting and physically limiting dresses, signifies her as a fetishized woman. For Everdeen, wearing clothing not accessible to her before and being increasingly mediated estranges her from her own people. While under the surveillance of the Capitol media, she gains power by becoming popular among the people of the Capitol and the rest of Panem. The black costume is a shiny bodysuit worn by Everdeen and, in a masculine version of the same costume, by Peeta, the male tribute of District 12, at the official Hunger Games opening ceremony. Illuminated by artificial flames, it

represents the coal miners of District 12. The black outfit, designed by Everdeen's stylist, symbolizes burning coal and aims to represent them in the most appealing way to the people of Panem, their possible sponsors. This outfit differs from Everdeen's former clothing significantly in style and meaning. Unlike the garments she wore in District 12, this costume does not contain any personal memories. It is newly made with no prior connection to her, with the lone purpose of turning Everdeen's body into a spectacle along with the symbolic representation of her home through the lens of the Capitol. Following the genealogy of dirt from Everdeen's early distressed outfits to the shiny black surface of the tribute dress, the idea of dirt becomes increasingly abstract. The dirty coal stands for poverty and oppression in District 12 but becomes a symbol of useful energy in the Capitol. The artificial flames of the "burning coal" become a signifier with different connotations: for the Capitol audience, it is a spectacle; for the viewer in the cinemas watching the flames, it represents hope. The dirty coal will lead to the Capitol's fall.

The next outfit Everdeen is wearing during the televised interview is a plain red dress with asymmetrical shoulders that touches the floor (see fig. 2.4). The bottom of the dress is covered in reflective precious gems, and the slightest movement gives the impression that the dress is "engulfed in tongues of fire" (Collins 112). During the interview scene, Everdeen is standing up and starts to twist herself in front of the audience, repeating the same gimmick used in the opening ceremony. The bottom of the dress seems to be "on fire." Everdeen's performance and her "burning" dress in the interview are seen as a success. The black and red dresses are precious in themselves, uncommon objects made to impress on their own and not accessible to everyone. Looking at the film images, it seems that the private, "real" body of Everdeen in the dirty costumes of District 12 loses momentum, while the manicured and corrected public body clothed in beautiful fashion succeeds. The black and red costumes represent Everdeen as part of the Capitol fashion circus, but within this system, it also signifies her body as doomed. While her

Capitol costumes connote success, Everdeen as the tribute who has to fight for her life in the arena is a body doomed to die. The conjunction of personal fate and Capitol fashion is contradictory. Fashion here takes on, within the narrative of the film, a political dimension, by being shown as a tool to deconstruct Everdeen's body as a commodity to entertain Panem. The clothing of the Capitol does not illustrate fashion cycles, nor the change of a current zeitgeist, rather it is "a constituent relational element in the fabric of the social" (Sawchuck 63). The costumes represent the forces that put her body and mind into place. The only signs of resistance are the artificial flames, though when they first appear as a fashionable gimmick on the black and red dresses, neither the Capitol nor Everdeen recognizes their potential. Both the Capitol audience and Everdeen see the flames as a fashion element to entertain; however, the cinema audience could recognize the flames as a sign of resistance against autocracy. Everdeen turns into an icon wearing artificial flames, which, for the Capitol and the rest of Panem, signify spectacle. Once Everdeen becomes the official tribute of her district, she passively lets her body be changed by the Capitol. Everdeen's clothing is attached to personal memories in District 12 but is replaced by symbolic clothes in the Capitol. She becomes the "girl on fire" representing her district in the Games. In the eye of the ruling Capitol, Everdeen has nothing to add to their world, except her randomly chosen, physical body. In the eyes of the rulers, Everdeen's colonized body does not exist as either person or subject. Instead, she turns into the desired object to be watched fighting to her death in the Hunger Games. From that standpoint, the selection of the tributes is not only random but also arbitrary. From the perspective of the Capitol, it does not matter which twenty-four children between the ages of twelve and eighteen get chosen from the districts. This logic influences the idea of how to look at the "fashion" of the Capitol. Everdeen's black and red costumes elevate her body temporarily into a different class, which becomes, a "(passive) raw material for the (active) gaze" of the Capitol audience (Mulvey

18). The costumes display Everdeen in cynical fashion as a traditional symbol of femininity. Fashion is cut off from its potential to signify change, and instead is used to mark "colonization, the 'anchoring' of ... bodies ... into specific positions, and parts of the body in the line of the gaze" (Sawchuck 53). The clean garments of the Capitol, like Everdeen's purified and "whitewashed" body, are carefully created signifiers that reassure the symbolic order set in place by Panem's ruling power.

Conclusion: Textures on the Hybrids of Clothes and Body

In the film's narrative, the dependency of Everdeen on the Capitol's powers is shown in her vestimentary transition from rags to riches. In the plane of the film image the custom-made textures on the clothing of the hybrid of Lawrence and Everdeen, showing desperation or luxury, are a visual negotiation of the efforts of the filmmakers to create realism and the viewers' efforts to make sense of the textures shown. The textures on the hybrid in the film are a distant reference to real-world matter. This chapter showed that these textures are a carefully researched tool to change the hybrid's clothing and body. The dirty texture on the body and clothes of District 12 transforms into a symbol of power and luxury in the Capitol and finally into the fuel that allows Everdeen to distinguish herself and become heroic. The changing texture signals the modification of Everdeen's body. While the "dirt" of District 12 is used to show the dependency of a community, to bring visually the inhabitants of District 12 together, the cleaning and dressing of Everdeen's "foreign" body in the Capitol is not an act of equalization. Everdeen does not bridge class differences by being cleaned, dressed, and taught to behave. Her outfit in District 12 and the forceful transformation of Everdeen into a simulacrum of a "Capitol lookalike" underlines the Capitol's inhumane imagination of the people they rule. In this first film the different textures on Everdeen's clothing signifying dirt or cleanliness underline the dependency

of Everdeen to the ruling class, while her "male" attire (she is the only women in District 12 wearing pants) can be seen as the character's adaption of her responsibilities in becoming the breadwinner after her dad passed away. These costumes also reflect her resilience against the omnipresent and restrictive power of the Capitol. *The Hunger Games* promotes the idea that a ruling elite can transform its citizenry into puppet-like creations for entertainment and to keep a balanced inequality. Landis claims that "character and clothing are one and the same thing"; a closer look at the use of texture on the body of Lawrence shows that the unity of the hybrid sometimes shows harsh contrast (D. Landis, *Scetch to Screen*). The two parts of the hybrid—the actor and character—negotiate their relationship throughout the film. In the beginning of the film Lawrence's body looks more pristine than the dirty costumes of the character, but later it seems to be that both parts combine. The character and her clothing and the acting of Lawrence convey the narrative of Everdeen, while her body and face also reflect the esteem of a rising female Hollywood star represented in the film image. The impact Lawrence has on the garments worn on camera becomes evident when looking at the sale of the costume on November 13, 2013, at Blacksparrow Auctions in Los Angeles (Manning). The clothing Lawrence wore in *The Hunger Games* became a valuable commodity on its own when sold. The aged and grimy hunting leather jacket worn by Lawrence sold for $50,000. The red, sparkling dress worn by her in the interview scene sold for $250,000. While these figures might prove the fact that people like the depiction of glamour and luxury more than dirty devastation, these numbers also show that the actor's body, even if absent, is an important part of verifying the hybrid's costume as artefact. The knowledge of the audience having seen the actor in a garment, the institutional proof by an auction house or museum, and the visual signs of wear prove the garment as legit. This systematic verification of cloth and texture as authentic through the film images, by the film production, auction houses, and museums creates an auratic artefact. The iconicity of the object

is validated by the spectator, who entrusts his or her own memory and the institution, as I write about in the next chapter. This chapter dissected the idea of different textures on the body/character hybrid in the field of its creation and delayed recognition by the viewers. In this process of creation and negotiation, the artificial textures seen on clothing are part of a fluid referentiality. Lawrence represents a precise time and place in America's actor circus. She, a young Hollywood actor, is the conjunction of her talent, public aspiration, and commerce. The Lawrence/Everdeen hybrid in the film creates constant negotiation of representation on the levels of body, clothing, and texture. The carefully chosen textures used signify through costumes and textures the different versions of the Lawrence/Everdeen hybrid as particular. These textures belong to the construction of the hybrid itself and its representation in the film's narrative, comprising countless references, absorbed and interpreted through the filmmakers', actors', and viewers' cultural realms and personal experiences. While the texture on the character's clothing turns from dirty to luxurious, the Hollywood actor looks constantly pristine. These differences in texture influence the value of a costume as artefact, seen in the auction results of Lawrence's costumes. The costumes and textures used in District 12 and the Capitol on the Lawrence/Everdeen hybrid reflect a changing gender norm. The analysis of Everdeen's costumes has shown that her male-indicated clothing of District 12 reflects the character's acceptance of becoming the breadwinner after the decease of her father. The distress, and stains, shown on her attire displays the external, economical circumstances outside of Everdeen's control. The rise of Everdeen, as female tribute becoming a counterbalance to the male ruling representatives of governmental power, changes her attire to the female conform look of the Capitol and transforms the idea of dirt as sign for dependency into a symbol of resistance.

The next chapter will explore the idea of iconicity of costumes and textures in the context of costume collections and museum exhibitions.

Chapter 3: Die Hard (1988): The Undershirt and the American Hero on Screen

The last case study in this thesis examines a shift in the depiction of masculinity in Hollywood action movies using the example of the artificially textured white ribbed men's undershirts seen on the hybrid Bruce Willis/John McClane in *Die Hard* (1988, dir. John McTiernan; costume Marilyn Vance). The chapter looks in detail at the transformation of the undershirts and their textures from image-clothing to artefact. It examines what happens to these undershirts used as costumes after the filming of the movie, when the physical garment, like the body of the actor, are no longer used to play the character on camera. With its focus on the "afterlife" of costumes as artefacts, this chapter completes the object-image-artefact cycle started in the first chapter. *Die Hard* stars Bruce Willis as the New York policeman John McClane heading to Los Angeles to visit his estranged wife, Holly (Bonnie Bedelia), and their children for the Christmas holidays. The movie takes place at his wife's company Christmas party, set in their headquarters at Nakatomi Plaza, a new skyscraper in Los Angeles. The building is taken over by a group of German thieves, who hope to steal the company's assets. McClane and the party guests are the only people left in the tower. The villains take everyone hostage, except for McClane, who slips away and becomes the lone hero, eliminating the attackers and rescuing his wife and the others. The film was a huge success for Fox Studios and Willis, resulting in four sequels. The undershirt and T-shirt shifted in the early twentieth century from being an invisible piece of clothing to a public symbol of masculinity in America. The undershirt and T-shirt became part of the emerging sport fashion of California in the 1920s, the military uniform in World War II, and popular in Hollywood films. Men's upper body underwear has a long tradition in Hollywood films of depicting blue-collar men, especially the dirty white ribbed

undershirts which became in many film genres a trope of working-class men, masculinity, and male eroticism. The artificially aged undershirt of McClane in *Die Hard* follows the Hollywood depiction of working class men in such iconic films as *Modern Times* (1936), *A Streetcar Named Desire* (1951), *The Hustler* (1961), *Blue Collar* (1978), *Mad Max* (1979), and *Rambo: First Blood* (1982). The beaten-up undershirt of *Die Hard* in particular became widely recognized on account of the popularity of Willis and his character McClane. The donation of one aged and distressed undershirt from the first *Die Hard* movie to the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History in 2007 underlined the iconicity of this artefact (see fig. 3.1). *Die Hard* has been the subject of diverse academic literature, such as Ardis and Dale (1991) (Ardis and Dale M.) who examine the racial and sexual implications of the McClane character; Sparks (1996)(Sparks), who compares the masculinity of Hollywood western and action films; Lyden (2003) (Lyden), who analyzes McClane as the unappreciated hero of a western-like action movie; and Flangan (2004) (Flangan), who argues that the success of McClane's character "represented a movement away from the model of the cruel, intractable hero, aligning the character with the wisecracking star persona of Bruce Willis" (Flanagan 112). More contemporary publications, such as the work of Tasker (2015) (Tasker), focus on the political influence of the 1980s on *Die Hard*, while Zywietz (2016)(Zywietz) looks at the characterization of the villains in the film. However, none of this literature looks in detail at the artificial texture on the undershirt by analyzing the intended meaning of this "dirt."

Die Hard was filmed at the end of the Reagan era, the year George H. W. Bush won the presidential election. Action movies in the 1980s negotiated a contradictory view of gender in a time when attitudes about masculinity and femininity in America were changing rapidly (Mulvey; Sawchuck; Butler). Long lasting patriarchic stereotypes of the male being the economic, intellectual, and physical superior of the nuclear family came into question. In the

aftermath of America's defeat in the Vietnam War and the start of deindustrialization as a result of the 1973 oil crisis, the struggling icon of masculinity was the theme of many movies (*Apocalypse Now*, 1979; *Rambo: First Blood*, 1982; *Platoon*, 1986; *Full Metal Jacket*, 1987) throughout the Reagan era. This changing view of masculinity in American action films opened a debate about different hero types and their attire (Jeffords; Brown; Schubart). The material for this chapter is based on different sources: the film *Die Hard*, the undershirts used as costumes, and interviews I conducted with seven people involved in creating these costumes and costume exhibitions. I also used interviews with Willis and others working on the film, found online either as video or text. I interviewed Marilyn Vance, the costume designer of *Die Hard*. I interviewed the costume designer and historian Deborah Nadoolman Landis, who was the senior curator of the Victoria and Albert Museum exhibition *Hollywood Costume*, and the founding director and chair of the David C. Copley Center for the study of Costume Design at UCLA. I interviewed the curators Dwight Blocker Bowers and Ryan Lintelman of the Division of Culture and the Arts at the National Museum of American History and received insights from the journalist Amy Crawford, who interviewed Willis in 2007, and Sheryl Garratt, who interviewed Vance in 2012. In addition, I interviewed Dr. Barbara Schröeter, head of the textile archive at the Stiftung Deutsche Kinemathek (SDK) Museum für Film und Fernsehen in Berlin, and Sylvia Frank, Director of the Film Reference Library at the TIFF Bell Lightbox in Toronto.

The Tradition of Action Movie Heroes

The artificial dirt on the *Die Hard* undershirts was influenced by and references a long tradition of American action movie heroes. The film makes connections to different genres of action movies, and in particular to the character Rambo but also to Western film heroes like John

Wayne, Roy Rogers, and Gary Cooper (Flanagan, 2004; Irsigler, 2012; Cohen 2011). Tasker writes:

> It was during the 1980s that a distinct action movie—as against the action genres of previous decades such as the Western, gangster film or crime thriller—came into view. The genre was evidently directed towards young adult filmgoers, featuring more vivid depictions of violence than had been the norm in adventure films and language that (as much as the violence) generated restrictive certificates. The revived action cinema of the 1980s forged new stars, among them Arnold Schwarzenegger, Bruce Willis, Eddie Murphy and Sylvester Stallone. (138)

McClane in *Die Hard* merges the attitude of a cop (*Dirty Harry*, 1971; *Beverly Hills Cop*, 1984; *Lethal Weapon*, 1987) with the vulnerability of Vietnam veterans like John Rambo (Sylvester Stallone) in *First Blood* and Wild West actors like John Wayne or Roy Rogers, or characters like Marshall Kane (Gary Cooper) in *High Noon* (1952). When talking to the top terrorist, Gruber, on his walkie-talkie (00:58:55–01:00:49), McClane denies the comparison with Rambo and instead makes an ironic reference to Roy Rogers:

> Gruber: Who are you, then?
>
> McClane: Just the fly in the ointment, Hans. The monkey in the wrench, the pain in the ass—
>
> G: Mr. Mystery Guest. Are you still there?
>
> Mc: Yeah, I am still here. Unless you want to open the front door for me?
>
> G: I'm afraid not. But you have me at a loss—you know my name, but who are you? Just another American who saw too many movies as a child. Another orphan of a bankrupt culture who thinks he's John Wayne, Rambo, Marshal Dillon.
>
> Mc: I was always partial to Roy Rogers, actually. I really like those sequined shirts.
>
> G: Do you really think you have a chance against us, Mr. Cowboy?

Mc: Yipee-ki-yay mother-fucker.

Naming fictive movie characters and real actors as references shows how deeply the ideas of dirt and the undershirt are embedded in American culture. The jump between the fictional character of the Vietnam veteran Rambo (Sylvester Stallone) and the character of Marshal Dillon (James Arness) to the real people John Wayne and Roy Rogers shows how confident the filmmakers of *Die Hard* were that the audience could follow this potpourri of male American "heroes." The mélange also indicates the obvious and ironic construction of McClane. The visual differences between the fictional Vietnam veteran and the two Western actors are generational and generic. Rambo, returning traumatized from the war, is most famous for showing his arm and torso muscles while wearing an undershirt. All three actors—John Wayne, Roy Rogers and James Arness—are known not for acting in undershirts, but for wearing the costume of a cowboy, which stands for traditional and romanticized advocates of the American man.

Though McClane shows similarities to Rambo in *First Blood* (1982), he is closer to a depiction of white masculinity in 1980s Hollywood action cinema that shifted towards vulnerable, imperfect heroes, susceptible to physical and emotional pain. This different type of hero can be seen as a response from Hollywood to questions of "how masculinity can be reproduced successfully in a post-Vietnam, post-Civil Rights, and post–women's movement era" (Jeffords 345). The assemblages of the character McClane tie ideas of traditional and contemporary masculinity, male eroticism, and heroism together to create a humorous "everyday, imperfect guy who was vulnerable to physical and emotional pain" (Abele 449). The undershirt frames and exposes the male upper physique— the shoulders, neck, arms, and biceps—while the blood and dirt that come to cover the fabric underscore the capability and fragility of these bodies. McClane's character is poised as a "third" version of male hero. The loner and anti-hero does what needs to be done to fight the bad, but does not see himself as a

moral institution or victim of past events, with the exception of his own (private) failure in taking care of his family. The white undershirts worn in *First Blood* and *Die Hard* signify class relations and dependency, but also function as icons of the ordinary white American man struggling with his identity in society. Muscular body forms and their exhibition become central to displaying masculinity on screen. While the status of the Western heroes of the 1940s and 1950s went unquestioned, the heroes of the 1980s are doubted by the authorities they represent, and only through their physical work and outstanding heroic acts, can they prove their uniqueness. The display of dirt on body and clothing plays a vital role in this transformation. These artificial textures come to signify the lonely, solo actions by the hero on screen. Dirt singles him out: nobody is as dirty as the hero. When McClane's undershirt turns army green in a chase scene (00:52:51) during which he is hiding in a ventilation shaft, a connection between the costumes of Rambo and McClane becomes obvious.

While I am not the first to suggest a link between *Rambo* and *Die Hard* (Brown 1996; Schubart 2007), neither Brown nor Schubart deal with the aspect of textures in their readings. McClane, like Rambo, is reacting to an unforeseen situation; both use the "secondary structures" of the environment to defeat their enemies. The hidden spaces, away from the presentable spaces of the headquarters of the Nakatomi Corporation, become important when talking about the textures on McClane's attire and mirror the symbolism of his clothing and its dirty textures. These are the places of sheer functionality. The constructions sites, ventilation shafts, and supply tunnels become the true representation of his character and validate the texture of his costumes. In the case of McClane, the "dirty" access tunnels, air vents, and elevator shafts become his realm, like the jungle for Rambo. Both have to improvise with the resources they find:

> Familiar with violence, able to follow hunches, to seize opportunities and think on his feet, McClane's police hero achieves extraordinary feats by using what comes to hand: parcel tape to strap a handgun to his back, a firehose round his

> waist to leap from the burning roof, strapping explosives to a computer monitor and dispatching them down an elevator shaft. (Tasker 146–47)

In *Die Hard* different styles of fashion are used to signify the gap between the American East and West Coasts and Europe, as well as symbolize class differences. The business people who surround McClane when he lands in Los Angeles and the lifestyle-terrorists, as Irsigler calls them, in European designer clothes, oppose the clothing style of McClane, who "fights against 'the logic of terror and money'" (Irsigler 90 Author's translation). McClane, who lands in Los Angeles dressed as an ordinary, working-class guy from New York City, does not fit with the luxury and dress of this centre of commerce. Even more so, when stripped down to his bare chest, he becomes the dirty hero of male labor. The costume McClane wears develops in three stages over the course of the film. It shows, at its core, the cross-section of a traditional working-class male outfit, and the silhouette of an erotized but common working-class hero. When McClane first appears on screen on board an airplane, he looks out of place, dressed too warmly for the Los Angeles weather. Unlike other action hero characters of the 1980s, like John Rambo (Sylvester Stallone), or actors like Arnold Schwarzenegger or Carl Weathers, McClane is not sartorially linked to a military tradition. His outfit speaks of adventure—the plain jacket and pants, as well as the canvas bag he is carrying in the airport scene, make him look like an Indiana Jones and John Wayne–inspired East Coast guy from New York exploring LA. The men around him are all dressed in shirts, ties, and suits like "a 'Babbitt clone' according to the screenplay" (Cohen 73). His grey pants and dark shoes, plaid shirt, and plaid-lined coat show him as an adventurous but tamed man. He does not belong with the agile and stylish businessmen and women around him. Men and women in business suits are McClane's economically superior but physically inferior counterparts.

When McClane accidentally reveals the holster of his pistol while leaving the plane, the meaning of his outfit shifts. McClane not only looks like a tough guy, he can also get physical if needed. His clothing style matches his attitude. His clothing suggests the optic of an urban individualist, in the tradition of white male Hollywood adventurists, following loosely the clothing styles seen in Western and adventure films. As Gibson analyzes, the Western clothing style became urban chic for the everyday man:

> The cowboy is a classical masculine stereotype evoking individualism ... Key to understanding the template of cowboy masculinity was historical tracing of the visual, marketing, and design mechanisms through which a stereotype formed, a claim to geographical ("Western") authenticity was made, and a certain "look" in clothing was institutionalized. Over successive generations "rugged" masculinities associated with rural frontier work became entrenched when metropolitan cultural industries—film, television, and fashion—amplified the stereotype, and its "look." ... The cowboy figure, to all intents and purposes a product of the urban imagination, retains only the faintest of echoes of a once-lived form of rural work and lifestyle. That imaginative, mythic, fantasy product needed visual codes for its prolongation, and found them in clothing design. (748)

Besides showing the hierarchical differences in class through clothing, the film uses fashion to situate itself geographically. The sport chic of the couple embracing (00:05:27)—he in bright turquoise and red, she in skintight, all-white leggings and top—links to a fashion style historically created in California in the beginning of the twentieth century and seen in opposition to the continental style used in New York or men's "coarse work clothes" (Scott 173). McClane, the East Coast family man and working-class cop, recognizes and comments on this leisure wear with "f... (inaudible) California" (00:05:28–00:05:32). By situating clothing in relation to its place of origin, McClane shows that he has a sense of fashion and is capable of acknowledging clothing as a signifier of place and time.

Later in the film, McClane shows the second layer of his costume; he talks with Holly, while cleaning up, wearing only a white undershirt and pants in the bathroom of her office. This scene is important for both characters. The conversation between husband and wife displays the power battle in a married relationship. The film is scripted to entertain but also to summarize gender relations in American culture of the late 1980s. The conversation starts out with traditionally gendered behaviour. She is soft-spoken, while he is reproachful and jealous (00:14:19–00:16:59):

> Holly: I missed you.
>
> John: Didn't miss my name, though, huh? Except maybe when you're signing cheques? Since when did you start using Ms. Gennero?
>
> H: This is a Japanese company. They figure a married woman's—
>
> J: You are a married woman, Holly. You are married to me.
>
> H: I will not have this conversation again, we did this in July.
>
> J: We never finished this conversation—
>
> H: I had an opportunity. I had to take it.
>
> J: Right, no matter what the consequences, no matter what it did to our marriage.
>
> H: It did not do anything to our marriage, except changed your idea of what our marriage should be.
>
> J: You have no clue what my idea of a marriage should be.
>
> H: I know exactly what your idea of our marriage should be.
>
> [Knocking on the door. The conversation ends.]

His undershirt seems to be the placeholder for a narrow-minded family man, in the tradition of stereotypical icons like Archie Bunker, "a white ethnic bigot ... a low-class version of Sinclair Lewis's Babbitt" (Berkowitz 207). McClane, the working-class cop stripped down to his uniform

and weapon, becomes an everyday man confronted with his "feminist" wife. But the sharp teeth of this new female power become dull in the film when the "terrorists" take over her realm. The film, not surprisingly for the conservative action film genre, displaces her feminist fortune quickly with "externally generated, sources of conflict" (Ardis and Bauer 128). Holly is characterized as an insufficient woman. She is, regardless of the shine of the latest fashion and the symbolic power it claims, "an incompetent wife and mother" and "ultimately, moreover, Holly is reduced to the stock role of damsel in distress: physically helpless, she must await rescue by her noble-warrior husband" (Cohen 77). However, looking at the bigger picture, it seems that Holly wins. McClane, depicted as a man with traditional views, the head of the family, is challenged by his ambitious wife. McClane loses the fight with his wife when wearing a white undershirt, undressed and without his gun, the symbol of male power, but as time will tell, McClane does not need these symbols of conformity to be the man and husband who wins her back. The reading of McClane's white undershirt is also influenced by the sartorial depictions of the villains. The villains define an irresponsible, silly, lacking-in-leadership kind of masculinity in order to create a positive realm within which McClane can grow to become the hero figure common in Hollywood action films. The character of the villains in *Die Hard* uses a stereotypical, historical matrix of enemy linked to the joint American–European history of World War II. McClane's white undershirt stands for working-class and male conservatism. The McClane character is crafted as individual, opposing any form of institution or hierarchical power. His attire "illustrates McClane's strangeness within capitalist society":

> McClane is not adequately dressed for the Christmas party, and he fights the terrorists in designer suits without shoes and in the plain undershirt. These outfits illustrate the struggle between the natural physicality of the hero and the technical-cultural superiority of his adversaries. The contrast develops in the course of the film: while the hairstyle and suit flawless on Ellis and Gruber until their end in the film, McClane, with growing duration of action, is increasingly reduced to his own physicality (Irsigler 91 Author's translation).

From the start, McClane is in opposition to men in suits who, through fashion and rank, signify their superior status. McClane does not compete with men in suits. He fights them verbally, but never physically. This is seen in his conversations with his neighbour on the plane, the villain Gruber, and Deputy Police Chief Robinson. These interactions show his alienation from people representing economic, cultural, or institutional authority. Only two of the twelve villains, Gruber and Theo (Clarence Gilyard, Jr.), the computer hacker, are dressed in suit jackets; the other gangsters represent "low-class chic" dependent on a hierarchical economic structure that rules them. All McClane's close combat scenes are with villains dressed like him, though in "European" style fashion. While McClane's undershirt becomes a dirty canvas of these interactions, the costumes of the villains do not get significantly dirty during the fight scenes. McClane "wearing dirt" while the others, villains and victims alike, "wear cleanliness," separates his attire from the others on the levels of defilement, hygiene, and physical work. All male characters besides McClane wear monochrome, plain-coloured clothes.

The costume of the main male character gradually peels off his body over the course of the film. The undershirt for McClane is a burden of his conservative manhood. As long he wears the undershirt, McClane cannot turn into the hero who will save his wife; nor can he accept her lifestyle. By stripping off his undershirt, McClane gives up his institutionalized male self-view and finds peace with his wife. The dirty undershirt of McClane signifies his transformation from a man defined by institutions to one purified of these masculine ambitions to control.

Towards the end of the film, McClane, almost defeated, takes off his last layer of symbolic manhood: the now-bloody green undershirt. In this scene, McClane has his most intimate conversation on a walkie-talkie with Sergeant Al Powell, a fellow cop he has yet to meet in person, about his wife, Holly. This talk between two men, accompanied by McClane's

transformation into a man stripped of visual significations of masculinity, turns him into the "real" hero of *Die Hard*, which enables him to rescue his wife. The bare chest signifies him as a "psychological" hero, who has mastered himself to become a better husband and father. His costume is synchronized with the change of his character on screen, while Holly's costume and character stay the same throughout the film. The business suit, as implied at the beginning of the film when McClane sits beside the man in a dress shirt, tie, and vest on the plane, is not the sartorial answer to the narrative of this film. McClane's pants and belt at the end of the film have become his only attire, apart from the neatly tucked-in undershirt which McClane reuses to bandage his bleeding right foot. Now, with unclothed upper body, the belted pants are the last visible piece of clothing McClane wears. The belt becomes a last sign of dignity for a man who gave literally everything: it is the sartorial piece that gives order in an "almost disintegrated" male attire. The belt is the link to the structural realm of the uniform McClane respects.

The Artefacts

For the original film shoot Vance and her team aged and distressed thirty-four undershirts worn by Willis and his stuntman Keii Johnston based on different requirements during the film shoot. Vance remembers: "17 of those [undershirts] were done for Willis, and 17 more [for the stuntman] looking like the ones we just did." In an interview for *The Telegraph* online edition in 2012 with Sheryl Garratt, Marilyn Vance stated a slightly higher number of undershirts were used: "He [Willis] had about 27 of the same vest. And then another 27 for the stunt people" (Garratt). The undershirts used for the actor and stuntman were divided into five to six stages from clean to dirty and had to look the same. "We were working on six [undershirts] at a time. Each had three; Bruce had three, and the stuntman had three of each stage" (Vance). After the film was finished shooting, the remaining costumes of *Die Hard* were scattered between

different collections. One of the undershirts used for Willis and his stuntman is now part of the collection at the National Museum of American History in Washington and is the only costume undershirt in a public collection. It is also the only known existing example of the thirty-four undershirts created for the film. While it was easy to find the undershirt that Twentieth Century Fox Studio and Willis donated to the Smithsonian, the whereabouts of the undershirt shown in the *Hollywood Costume* exhibition, which belonged to Twentieth Century Fox Studio as well, was not traceable. Keith Lodwick, co-curator of the Hollywood Costume exhibition and curator of Theatre & Performance at the Victoria and Albert Museum wrote in an email:

> The *Die Hard* ensemble—vest, trousers etc.—were all loaned from the Twentieth Century Fox Studio archive (the contact I had is Victoria Fox). I have checked my own archive visit images and Fox had a number of costumes from the *Die Hard* film series.

Lodwick sent me the V&A condition report of the *Die Hard* undershirt used in Hollywood Costumes, which states that the undershirt was used in *Die Hard* and that Fox Studios was the lender. When I contacted Snow from Fox Studios Los Angeles, I was informed that the undershirt used in the Hollywood Costume exhibition was "probably destroyed" (Snow) and the only undershirt remaining was with the Smithsonian: "Upon further investigation the one and only tank top is at the Smithsonian" (Snow). Ellen M. Harrington, the collection's curator of the not yet publicly opened Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences Museum in Los Angeles, revealed only that the museum had the undershirt as a loan from Fox Studios when the *Hollywood Costume* exhibition was shown at the Wilshire May Company Building in Los Angeles: "We had borrowed that item from 20th Century Fox, so I'm not sure what may have happened with the ownership between then and now" (Harrington).

The Smithsonian's undershirt was most likely worn in the scene (01:39:04) where McClane crawls on the ground, taking shelter in the bathroom, feet bloody from an earlier scene when he walks on broken glass. In earlier scenes (01:31:13 /01:34:10) similar stains are shown, but the shirt seems to be less greenish on the bottom. The most visible difference between the costume in the film images and the Smithsonian's artefact is the intensity of the colours used to give the undershirt its aged and distressed look.[21] Overall, the shirt is much more faded than the shirt seen in the film. Vance confirmed that the green colour is from a textile dye, which penetrated the fibre of the undershirt. She also spoke of the ageing and dyeing process of the *Die Hard* undershirt, and the research that went into finding the right colours and look. For the first *Die Hard* film, Vance did not have a designated breakdown or textile artist who painted and dyed the costumes. She referred to her "costumer" as helping with the creation of the "dirty" McClane look. The term "costumer" is a general description for people in the costume crew who handle and organize costumes on set. First Vance explored the dust and dirt on the different sets of undershirts: "We played around with the cloth and the different types of dust factors and colours of the steam room of the workroom underneath the pipes, the ceiling, the fans, the [loading] docks," to determine the colour and style of artificial dirt. After looking at the dirt coming from the environment, Vance concentrated on the body of the actor: "He [Willis] is also sweating in the heat of those rooms." Two kinds of "dirt" were required, external and bodily substances, to get the desired look. Making tests on samples, it became clear to Vance that a base colour and coat of dust needed to be used to achieve the desired texture.

> If you just dusted, it would not have penetrated the fibre as much. We had had a kind of a dye effect as the base, ... you take a sponge and [pound] on the shirt. You put it on a mannequin, and you play with that, and use a sponge to start with then you try all different aspects. ... when it played in the scene, it had dust over the dye. (Vance)

The Smithsonian undershirt is from the batch that was sponge dyed with different greenish dyes. These base colours were enhanced during shooting by using coloured dust and film blood, a sugar-based, non-permanent substance used on skin and clothing, often applied during filming so that it appears fresh. The texture of the Smithsonian's undershirt looked soft; no areas were encrusted. The undershirt seems to have been cleaned. When smelling the *Die Hard* undershirt, no body odour could be identified—only a neutral, non-perfumed fresh scent was noticeable. This means the shirt in its original state looked different from the current version in the collection.[22] I met with curators Bowers and Lintelman to see the *Die Hard* undershirt in their costume collection. Looking at the costume, the fabric seems to be the usual cotton double ribbed quality, now with a roughed-up and peeling surface, with no other damage visible except for some hanging threads on the bottom seam. The undershirt is randomly blotch-dyed with an olive-, army green–like colour.

The *Die Hard* artefact shows, at the centre neckline, an irregular, triangle-like shape in an off-white colour. Coloured stains in different sizes splatter the front of the undershirt, some areas with a blood-red colour. The largest blood-like stains can be seen at the centre of the neckline. On the left side of the chest, a dark, irregular print of a dirty wire is visible. There is a dark stain on the right armhole near the top of the chest. No brand label or size is visible. On the centre back of the neckline, five hard-to-read characters in groups of three and two are visible. They appear to be handwritten; the first three letters could be deciphered as F-O-X, but the last two signs are illegible. Inside the centre back, a piece of white twill tape is sewn in by hand, with the digits 2007-0097-01. Lintelman confirmed that this label is from the museum to identify the artefact. Another version of a Fox Studio *Die Hard* undershirt was part of the film sequel *Die Harder* (1990) and on display in the 2012 *Hollywood Costume* exhibition[1] at the Victoria and Albert Museum in London from October 20, 2012, to January 27, 2013. The loan agreement

from the V&A states that the undershirt was used in *Die Hard*. I could not compare the Smithsonian version of the undershirt with the one shown in *Hollywood Costume* as objects, only as images. I used photographs I took of the Smithsonian undershirt and images of the display of the undershirt at the *Hollywood Costume* exhibition that Lodwick from the V&A provided. The images of the artefact on display showed differences in the style and texture of the undershirt and pants. Compared to the Smithsonian artefact, the undershirt shown in the *Hollywood Costume* exhibition at the V&A looks less aged and distressed. I believe that the undershirt on display was not in fact from the original *Die Hard* movie filmed in 1988, as it was labelled, but rather from the sequel, *Die Hard 2*: *Die Harder*, filmed two years later. Vance was the costume designer for both. The undershirt on display in the *Hollywood Costume* exhibition had a large bloodstain on the left side. In the film, the first bloodstain on McClane's undershirt appears after his fight with one of the villains (00:37:42). This bloodstain is significantly smaller than the stain shown on the artefact in *Hollywood Costume*. In the scenes that followed, in and on top of the elevator, the bloodstain does not grow (McClane is seen wrapping the corpse of the villain he killed in the elevator with Christmas decorations (00:38:58); he then climbs out on top of the elevator cabin (00:39:44) and crouches there (00:41:50) before climbing out of the elevator shaft (0042:15)). Nevertheless, the bloodstains on the shirt look different in every scene related to the elevator—the stains are in different locations. This indicates that this scene was shot out of order (not linearly) and that in each scene, Willis was wearing a different version of the undershirt stained by the costume crew. None of these undershirts looks even close to the shirt shown in *Hollywood Costume*. The undershirt on display is missing the dark marks of the metal ropes McClane's undershirt shows after he leaves the elevator shaft (between 00:37:42 and 00:41:50). The two undershirts from the Smithsonian and Fox Studios seem to have been worn by the lead actor, Willis, though in different films. Comparing the cut of the Smithsonian's undershirt with the Fox

Studios' undershirt in detail, they are almost identical but have different armhole sizes (the Smithsonian undershirt is cut lower around the arms). The pants shown in the film and on display at *Hollywood Costume* are not alike. In the movie, McClane is wearing grey pants, which look like flannel, while the pants in the *Hollywood Costume* exhibition are made of grey corduroy. The fact that the undershirt is presented as one thing (from *Die Hard*) but could well be another (from *Die Hard 2*), shows that the *Hollywood Costume* exhibition was less concerned with authenticity and confirming the real origins of the artefact than with treating it like an iconic object that represents Hollywood and Bruce Willis generally. The "hyper-hybrid" of costume, actor, and character is more important than the use of the object in the production of the films.

The Exhibitions

Undershirts worn by Willis have been shown at various events. The following section will establish where and why these undershirts were displayed as artefacts. In the process of becoming public objects, only a few of the undershirts were selected to be displayed; the remaining undershirts sank into the oblivion of public and private costume collections or just vanished, as many Hollywood costumes do. In the foreword of the 1974 exhibition catalogue of *Hollywood Costume Design* in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, curator Diana Vreeland draws attention to the fact that, "once a movie was completed, the costumes were generally considered expendable" (Vreeland), which is still true today. There are significant differences in the handling of artefacts between a costume collection in a film studio and a museum environment, due to the fact that costume collections in a studio environment are an active stock of clothes reused for a variety of film projects. Fox Studios, which donated the *Die Hard* undershirt to the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History, stored the artefact for almost twenty years in its costume collection under unknown conditions (Crawford, "Die Hard

Donation")/(Crawford, *Email Interview with Author*). In the *Hollywood Costume* catalogue, Landis describes industry standards of deaccessioning a costume collection after a film project is finished. It can be assumed that Fox Studios follows this protocol in its own collection. The museum finally separates the clothing from its use as something worn on the body, and uses high professional standards for storing cloth-based artefacts to preserve the objects (Bowers and Lintelman). Once it was part of the National Museum of American History collection, the value of the undershirt increased, not only as an icon for the hybrid of McClane and Wills, but also as an icon of American history.

The *Die Hard* (1988) undershirt, which Bruce Willis presented to the museum in late June 2007, became part of the *Treasures of American History* exhibition halfway through its official run (Crawford, "Die Hard Donation") (see figs. 3.2 and 3.3). The press release by the Smithsonian places the *Die Hard* undershirt among other historically important objects in the exhibition. These artefacts ranged from Hollywood film objects to American political memorabilia. The exhibition brought together Dorothy's ruby slippers, Abraham Lincoln's top hat, and *Star Wars* robots. Bowers, curator at the National Museum of American History, talks about the difficulties of communicating the importance of the undershirt as an artefact among these other objects:

> The undershirt is very iconic of his character in the film. So, that's the reason why I wanted it. To explain it to people who were not aware of what costumes can do, it took a little bit of effort. Particularly people were very derisive about collecting an undershirt. The people who were derisive were not the public, but staff people ... They did not see it as being worthy of a museum. (Bowers and Lintelman)

The dispute Bowers mentioned was partly about ranking artefacts of American culture by importance. The comparison of the two sartorial artefacts—Lincoln's top hat and the dirty *Die Hard* undershirt—shows that high and low culture seem to be categories of the past. The actual

top hat and undershirt, despite being objects from different time periods, represent everyday men's attire, though dramatically different in statement and reception. Lincoln's handmade hat served to distinguish and separate the wearer publicly from others; it was an object of the upper class. The undershirt from *Die Hard* represents a mass-produced piece of clothing that became popular in the early twentieth century, a form of underwear made to be hidden from the public eye. The Smithsonian's National Museum of American History validates and equates both objects by including them in its collection. Their inclusion in a museum guarantees their authenticity, including the fact that both have been in touch with the bodies of their famous wearers:

> "When you see that shirt, chances are that you know that it was Bruce Willis' outfit. That is the reason why I wanted it. I wanted it because it would say so much to the audience looking at it, without a lot of explanation. And I do believe that artefacts do not need a lot of explanation." (Bowers and Lintelman)

Though both have a very different story and display different periods of American history, the artefacts are now part of one collection and are treated in the same way. In my interview with Bowers and Lintelman, they remark: Lintelman: We try to collect ... the ones [artefacts] that really speak to the audience. Bowers: To be as iconic as possible (Bowers and Lintelman).

In the V&A's *Hollywood Costume* exhibition, the undershirt was presented in another context (see fig. 3.3). The sheer number of costumes from different periods, genres of Hollywood filmmaking, and private and public collections created a broad and varied tapestry of artefacts and relationships between them. Landis remembers:

> In *Hollywood Costume* we had ... 130 costumes and 64 lenders, 64 lenders because in some of the costumes like for Hedy Lamarr in *Samson and Delilah* (1949 film) the cape came from one lender and the gown came from another lender. So many of those clothes were pieced together from all parts of the world. It was incredible. (D. N. Landis, *Interview with Author*)

Showing object-clothing as museum artefacts, when they are already known to a wide range of people as image-clothing on screen, requires considering how these artefacts can be related to viewer expectations. Though *Hollywood Costume* references clothing in its title, Landis's idea was to embed the textile artefacts in a cinematic-like emotional setting. The exhibition followed a three-act choreography, with the first act illuminating the costume designers' process of creating a costume from "script to screen" by interpreting the written-costume in textile objects (D. N. Landis, *Interview with Author*). The second act concentrated on the relationship between the designer and the creative team responsible for the film production, which in Landis's case meant looking at the "intimate creative collaboration of great filmmakers" and actors while sparing the people who actually craft the costume (D. N. Landis, *Hollywood Costume: About the Exhibition*). The third and final act used costumes to show the "history of Hollywood and the 'silver screen.'" The exhibition was designed to give a holistic overview of the creative work going into the design of clothing used in film and its reception as images on screen:

> The costume designer gives the clothes to the actor, the actor gives the character to the director, and the director tells the story. When a character and a film capture the public's imagination, the costumes can ignite worldwide fashion trends and influence global culture. Cinematic icons are born when the audience falls deeply in love with the people in the story. And that's what movies, and costume design, is all about. (D. N. Landis, *Hollywood Costume: About the Exhibition*)

Landis argues that "the audience makes icons" (D. N. Landis, *Interview with Author*). For her, it was central to elucidate the iconic emotions that the audience might see in these textile artefacts. Landis states, "My great pride in its success was not the collection of clothes. The clothes are immaterial. It was meant to be an emotional journey." She summarizes that the

exhibition was “not about the clothes but bringing those people to life for one last time” (D. N. Landis, *Interview with Author*). By focusing on the iconic force of costumes, Landis reinforced the already established connection between the costumes on display and their audience. *Hollywood Costume* tried to level out the differences between the dirty undershirt and the finely made dresses on display, such as the outfits of Lady Marie (Marlene Dietrich) in *Angel* (1937, Costume Design Travis Banton) and Marie Antoinette (Norma Shearer) in *Marie Antoinette* (1938, Costume Designer Adrian Adolph Greenberg). The undershirt is a symbol of the shift away from craftsmanship in costume-making to the use of mass-produced “everyday wear” as film costumes. With the end of the golden era, the influence of Hollywood films on the fashion market became less important. The way that films were produced changed after World War II. Film and costume production were less centralized, and clothing was made in less opulent and more “realistic” styles. New clothing styles influenced characters and their looks in Hollywood films, inspired by American youth culture and streetwear (*The Wild One*, 1953; *Rebel Without a Cause*, 1955) or the uniform worn in World War II, which had just ended (*A Streetcar Named Desire*, 1951). When asked why she chose to present Willis’s costume in *Hollywood Costume*, Landis responds, “This undershirt to me and to many people has equal significance.” Landis’s main goal for that exhibition was to show costumes the viewer adores and “iconizes.” The undershirt as artefact references a reality larger than the object itself. The dirty undershirt of McClane worn by Willis as “a mass-reproduced icon of cultural history” is overlaid by textures of emotion (Buchloh 46). The film images of the hybrid Willis/McClane wearing dirt on the undershirt constructed a “social reality in pictures, whose authority shaped the collective imagination” (Belting and Dunlap). By re-creating an emotional atmosphere comparable to film, Landis wanted to educate people about the complex role of costume in the cinematic storytelling process by highlighting the costume designer’s work.[23] This is in contrast to Bowers and the

newly appointed curator Lintelman, who focused on a broader view of the political and cultural history of the United States of America. The undershirts as icons in the *Hollywood Costume* exhibition or at the Smithsonian, selected based on their appearance in *Die Hard* and *Die Harder*, glosses over the use of the artefact as clothing on the actors' bodies in the making of the film. That the undershirt is seen as one iconic piece of clothing conceals the fact that there were many versions of the undershirt used and worn by the Willis/McClane hybrid. On a symbolic level this one undershirt stands for much more—it blurs all undershirts and becomes one "dirty undershirt." From the perspective of the filmmakers this undershirt is used to give the impression that one costume piece was used. For the viewer this artefact represents the whole *Die Hard* universe. The undershirt and its faded texture are superseded by the presence of the film—it is no longer an artefact representing a specific time and place but becomes a symbol of the iconic *Die Hard* series. On a historical level this simplification does not reflect the work that went into the creation of this symbol of masculinity. The twenty-five-year-old object as artefact symbolizes a whole range of different connections, which reach back to the production of the film, and provides evidence of the film that was made. The undershirt, its artificial texture and the evidence of usage, evokes an emotional reaction that reflects the symbolic significance that the public has come to believe after seeing the *Die Hard* movies. In the logic of the museum, the dirty undershirt is worth showing because it embodies, in the eyes of the viewers, memories of a collective past. The meaning of the shirt's texture is twofold: as patina it reflects ownership through evidence of real usage (it belonged to Willis's body, it is the property of the film *Die Hard*, it was collected by a museum), while the artificial dirt reflects the construction of the film narrative as fictitious. How Vance, the costume designer of *Die Hard* and *Die Harder*, analyzes the place, function, and aesthetic of the undershirt and its texture was reflected in the artificial

dirt that she created. This is, like the patina, not arbitrary but meaningful, a sign of the time of its creation.

The viewer of the artefact is similarly separated from the object as the spectator is while watching a film. The museum, by withdrawing the haptic sensation of the artefact's materiality from the viewer and by presenting objects behind glass or not allowing the artefacts to be touched, estranges the object from the museum-goer and limits the viewer's reception. The artefact on display might evoke even less sensation in the viewer in comparison to the animated garment in the film. The narrative of the film and the actor activate the costume and its texture for the spectator, while the artefact's vivacity is limited to the memory of the viewer. In this context the materiality of the artefact becomes secondary to the underlying power of individually and institutionally formed memories. The experience of having seen the film and the narrative of the movie become one pool of memories. The potency of the dirty *Die Hard* undershirt as artefact lies in its commoditization by the institution of film. Landis, like Bowers, understood the visual power of this icon and that the icon can "speak for itself." She described her approach to presenting the shirt as an "emotional journey ... to reconnect with something we love." Bowers also favors exhibiting iconic objects and states, "I do believe that artefacts do not need a lot of explanation." This simplification of the dirty undershirt icon follows the logic of the film narrative in *Die Hard,* in which complex contexts are reduced to universal emotional messages about "bad" and "good" seen through the lens of American values. When *Die Hard* was cinematically released in forty-eight countries, the dirty undershirt became a commodity, a thing of satisfaction that visualized the idea of a white male American hero in a dirty undershirt as a specific cultural trope to a culturally diverse audience. The dirty texture, and the undershirts as artefact, are physical evidence of the creation of the film, and the body of the actor; they become "a universal certainty" for a specific idea of masculinity. The materiality of the dirty undershirt,

the coloured ribbed fabric, implies beauty, scarcity and culture; and it impacts the person on a personal, emotional and intellectual level. The dirty undershirt on display is an item of luxury, like the physical body of Willis. Both are well-guarded objects of celebrity.

Conclusion

Clothing in film, with its practical value almost dismissed and part of the exaggerated, virtual hybrid of actor and character, becomes a sensual and emotional link to the costume shown on display. The fact that a famous Hollywood actor wore and sweat in these garments might have more weight than the suffering of the character in the film. An example of how much a costume on display is associated with the actor's body and not the character is revealed in an anecdote told by Barbara Miller, Curator of the Collection and Exhibitions at the Museum of the Moving Image in New York, at the 2015 NYU Film Costume Conference. That year, Bill Cosby, a stand-up comedian who played himself in *The Cosby Show*, was accused of multiple sexual assaults against women, which impacted the public's view of his clothes on display at the Museum of the Moving Image:

> The Bill Cosby sweater is an interesting example of that sort of relic of the costume being part of who somebody is, or ... his status. When all the press started coming out about Cosby and his alleged behavior, we were getting some attention for that because we had some costume sweaters that Bill Cosby had worn in *The Cosby Show* ... and people were outraged that we could continue to exhibit those sweaters. Their existence in our gallery was a validation of Bill Cosby, the man. It is complicated because that show was sort of him and the public mind and all that but ... we felt like ... it is a costume. It is a costume worn by an actor playing a character and we are not advocating the ... very terrible activities. ... but in the end we took them down ... acknowledging what that connection is and [so as] not [to] offend people. (Miller)

In the case of the Cosby sweater, the museum visitors saw the Cosby sweater as a stronger link to the actor's body than to his character on TV. This notion marks a reversal of the

body/character hybrid seen in film, where the costume of the character represents the fictional figure in opposition to the actor's body, which plays the character but is visually identifiable as a specific Hollywood actor. The representation of the television figure Cosby in colourful knitted sweaters on display did not align with the idea of seeing Cosby, the man, as a suspected rapist. The sweater as icon for the character Cosby, as well as for Cosby the man, shows how ambivalently this tapestry of emotions is perceived by the audience and the museum curators. Miller's quote "it is a costume," Landis's idea of "potency," and Bower's "without a lot of explanation" show how curators rely on the idea that film costumes in exhibitions are not arbitrary signs related to the visual narrative of a movie. The iconic sweater of the body/character hybrid Cosby becomes ambiguous when it becomes obvious that Cosby the man conducts himself improperly; this public knowledge of his wrongdoing destroys the iconic status of the objects ascribed by the film and the museum. This example expresses that while the museum tends to conserve a popular belief in a collective cultural memory, the viewer's reception of the artefact is receptive to change in the object's narrative.

Conclusion – Every Stain a Story

"Every era creates an image of history marked with a contemporary stamp."

Edward Maeder in *Hollywood and History*

By analyzing artificial textures on costumes in three Hollywood movies of different genres—*Mama* (2013) as horror, *The Hunger Games* (2012) as sci-fi, and *Die Hard* (1988) in the category of action—this project explored the North American interpretation of trauma, class, and otherness. Dirt on costumes in film connotes as a metaphorical and physical icon. Dirt plays an important role in representing personal and cultural understandings of hygiene and cleanliness as interpretations of selfhood and otherness in Hollywood storytelling. Filmmaking is the complex art of translating mental images, spoken language, and written words into a physical world recorded with an optical device and transformed into analog and digital moving images. Body and clothing, as body/character hybrid, are two of the many parts used to create meaning in this "world." Each of the Hollywood films discussed started as a linguistic structure, with human bodies as a main point of reference. Landis frames costume-making for these bodies as a conjunction of narrative and dress: "character and clothing is one and the same thing. Clothes are a pure expression of identity" (Landis). A costume in a film image is a peculiar set of coincidences where body, clothing, and textures meet to tell a story. The audience can actively engage with the film: thus, the meaning of the scene is replicated and changed when watched by many. The film creates agency for the viewer. In Barthes's sense, the film images become a visual text "made of multiple writings, drawn from many cultures and entering into mutual relations of dialogue, parody, contestation"(Barthes and Heath 148). The spectator's body and mind create meaning by drawing on personal concepts and common relationships to the scene.

The spectator reacts on sensorial, emotional, mental, and physical levels, liking or rejecting what they see on screen. These emotional and common actions can liberate the viewer from their role as consumer—the process of finding meaning within a visual language by the filmmakers is repeated by the audience on their own terms; this process Barthes calls "textuality." The research images for *Mama* used by Sequeira, like the film images of *Mama* seen by the audience, become independent from their creators and allow a new form of reading, a "playing with the text" (Barthes and Heath 162).[24] The extent to which textuality is restricted when confronted with a set of rules or norms became evident at the 2016 Academy Awards. A "scandal" arose on social media over the outfit the costume designer Jenny Beavan wore while accepting the award for Best Achievement in Costume Design for the dystopian movie *Mad Max: Fury Road*. The live transmissions showed Alejandro G. Inarritu, the Director of the competitor film, *The Revenant*, with men grouped around him, all wearing the expected suits. The recording on YouTube shows the men not clapping while Beavan passes by, wearing pants, a leather-like biker jacket with an embroidered skull of gemstones, a scarf, and chunky jewelry, on her way to the podium to accept the Oscar. Media plays an important role here in almost instantly historicizing moments that have just occurred as live transmissions of events on screen. The missing act of clapping was interpreted by social media users as a critique of Beavan's outfit. The scene became the centre of a media "scandal" in which the men allegedly shamed a woman for her misconduct: wearing the wrong clothes. In an interview after the event, Beavan reflected on her own body: "I'm short, I'm fat. I really would look ridiculous in a gown. What I was actually wearing at the Oscars was sort of an homage to Mad Max—a kind of biker outfit" (Beavan). Beavan's self-consciousness about her body and her professional knowledge of storytelling through the interaction of body and dress on camera, determined her choice of outfit. Beavan tried to unite her self-image with the requirement of dressing for the Oscars by using the power of storytelling. This attempt failed.

The scandal is based on Beavan's misunderstood attempt to use her outfit as a wearable narrative of her own body, as a vehicle for personal memories of designing the costumes for *Mad Max: Fury Road*. Beavan's ensemble was not primarily understood as a concession or comment on the ageing female body, or homage to the film Beavan was representing. Instead, her outfit was seen as resisting the fashion and dress code that levels participant bodies and conforms to expectations of the event. Dress here is a representation of a Zeitgeist that equalizes bodies in deference to the importance of the occasion (imagine Beavan visiting the Pope in a bikini). The reaction to her outfit at the Academy Awards ceremony illustrates that the reception of clothing and its textures, especially in the form of an image, is not primarily a reaction to substance but is a social act.

In the process of filmmaking, the objects on camera, here body and dress, become alienated by being reproduced (translated into an image). The authentic object (original) stays behind as purposeless once filmed. The process of filmmaking creates exclusivity by withholding the physical world of filmmaking from the audience, but film is interested in transferring the aura of the original into the image. The physicality and complexity of filmmaking is then obscured from the audience, and with it, the aura of real bodies and objects in use. The paradox of film is that for the audience, the moving images create aura and agency for the bodies, costumes and textures pictured, but this only functions in the form of the film narrative and says nothing of the process of film making. The magic of telling a story with images only works when the many pieces creating the illusion are hidden. The filmmakers' personal imaginations negotiate the authenticity of artificial dirt on costumes to meet the collective imagination of the audience. Filmmakers use a wide range of research images as visual references to find the right "look" for the narrative they want to create. The process of finding visual references and the fragmentation of their meaning stays hidden, in favour of the visual language used in the movie. The fragmentation blurs the provenance (origin) of the original

pictures and focuses on specific details in the image. The rich cultural history from which filmmakers source images becomes an unspecific, emotional link to history. The story of the film becomes more important than historical accuracy; the costume has to feel authentic but visually pleasing to the audience. The imaginative fragments of identity collected and brought together by the filmmaker are intended to authenticate the narrative with the presence of a body, character, clothing, and textures in an effort to fuse the sensual and historical for a contemporary audience. The ambivalence of interpretation between what the filmmaker creates and what the spectator repurposes is possible because the icons used in a film are not universal, but arbitrary; in that sense fiction does not occupy the place of the collective imaginary. The iconic concepts used in film to tell a story are not readable for everyone. For example, the research images used to determine the level of artificial dirt on costumes is seldom part of the public distribution. The process of making a film is hidden from the public eye and becomes only visible when encoded in the film images themselves. Artificial dirt, while precisely placed by the filmmakers, remains arbitrary in its overall (universal) meaning. Artificial dirt is used to ease the audience into accepting the visual narrative as authentic and part of the character's identity. Textures and clothing have precisely planned agency, which plays a "visible role" in certain moments of the film, when the costumes and their textures become relevant to the story. After filmmaker and actor have finished employing a costume as a tool to build a character, then the costume, its textures and residues from wear, in short, its patina, become passive evidence for their time on camera. The costume transforms from active object to restricted artefact representing certain actions, to be studied and conserved from disrepair. The cut, form, colour, and textures are meticulously studied layers, documenting their time on the actor's body while on camera. Costumes known to the public as worn by certain actors become desired collector's items, as shown in the chapters on *The Hunger Games* and *Die Hard*. These costumes represent the

body/character hybrid as an icon, and this is precisely what Bowers refers to when talking about the Die Hard undershirt:

> When you see that undershirt, chances are that you know that it was Bruce Willis' outfit (in *Die Hard*). That is the reason why I wanted it, I wanted it because it would say so much to the audience looking at it, without a lot of explanation. (Bowers)

Everyone, including the costume designer Vance, the curators Bowers and Lintelman, and the actor Willis, expressed in interviews their fascination about an ordinary undershirt becoming such a powerful icon. The costume designer and actor were amazed that mass-produced underwear could turn into a museum artefact of Hollywood history. The curators focused on the iconicity of the artefact to draw visitors to their institution in the hope that the visitor expectation of the event would overlap with the costumes on display. An example where display and reception did not align is the presentation of Bill Cosby's sweater in the Museum of the Moving Image, discussed in the third chapter. Landis created an atmospheric display to trigger emotions hidden in the lifeless costumes on mannequins. Artificial dirt in the film image or as artefact on display is always only a fragmented Lodwick, experience of the creation of a film, which Landis in her exhibition design for Hollywood Costume, works against, by combining costumes on display as artefacts and moving images in one location. A film can be repeated, looped in both directions—forward and backwards—and it can be fragmented into a split second—for example, see Peter Tscherkassky's *Outer Space* (1999)—but it cannot completely leave the intended corpus of its medium. Landis blew up the portrait of Willis as McClane to show it in a loop on a screen positioned as the "head" of the costume. A fragment of the body/character hybrid from *Die Hard* is iconic enough to trigger memories of the film and draw interest to the costume as artefact. The film and fractions of it, as used here, tell a selected tale of an artefact's existence. The many bodies, their sex, skin, eyes, and hair colour, their voices, like the many costumes and

their fibre colours, fabric construction, styles, cuts, makes, and textures, are significant details that build the character, but once the film is released to the public their physical existence becomes secondary. Of the thirty-four *Die Hard* undershirts used to create the character McClane, only one exists, to my knowledge, in a public costume collection. This evokes the question of whether the focus on the iconicity of things is the right angle from which to talk about costume design. Artificial dirt on the costume as artefact becomes a double-folded icon of the intended meaning by the filmmaker and the interpretation by institution and audience. The scope of this project follows an object-image-artefact model for the lifecycle of costumes, from idea to artefact, through the study of three films in three different genres. The three case studies shed light onto the rich history and tradition of costume-making and artificial textures on costumes in Hollywood movies, but do not touch on the wide range of character costumes found in genres like gore and splatter, zombie, alien, sci-fi, post-apocalyptic, slapstick, and porn. The study showed that artificial dirt is not only the remake of physical matter seen as dirt, but more so a reestablishment of concepts of exclusion of people seen as foreign, different, and therefore dangerous to that which the film claims as our norm. Images, moving or not, are the most common way to experience artificial dirt on film costumes, with the exception of occasional public displays of costumes in film theatres to promote current movies, or costume exhibitions such as those discussed in the *Die Hard* chapter. These displays of artefacts might be the closest a film audience can come to experiencing the body of the actor. The missing body of the actor leaves the displayed costume as an abstracted crime scene for the knowing visitor to examine from a distance, to establish evidence. This thesis formulated different ways to analyze artificial dirt, as reference to real-world mineral and biological matter, as signifier of sex, race, and class differences within a specific cultural realm, and to highlight cultural differences between the displayed norm and otherness. Artificial dirt as seen with the object-image-artefact model is

always only an aesthetic assumption of reality mirroring how we see others, but it never smells like the sweaty person sitting beside us in the cinema.

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Appendix: Images

Mama

The Hunger Games

Die Hard

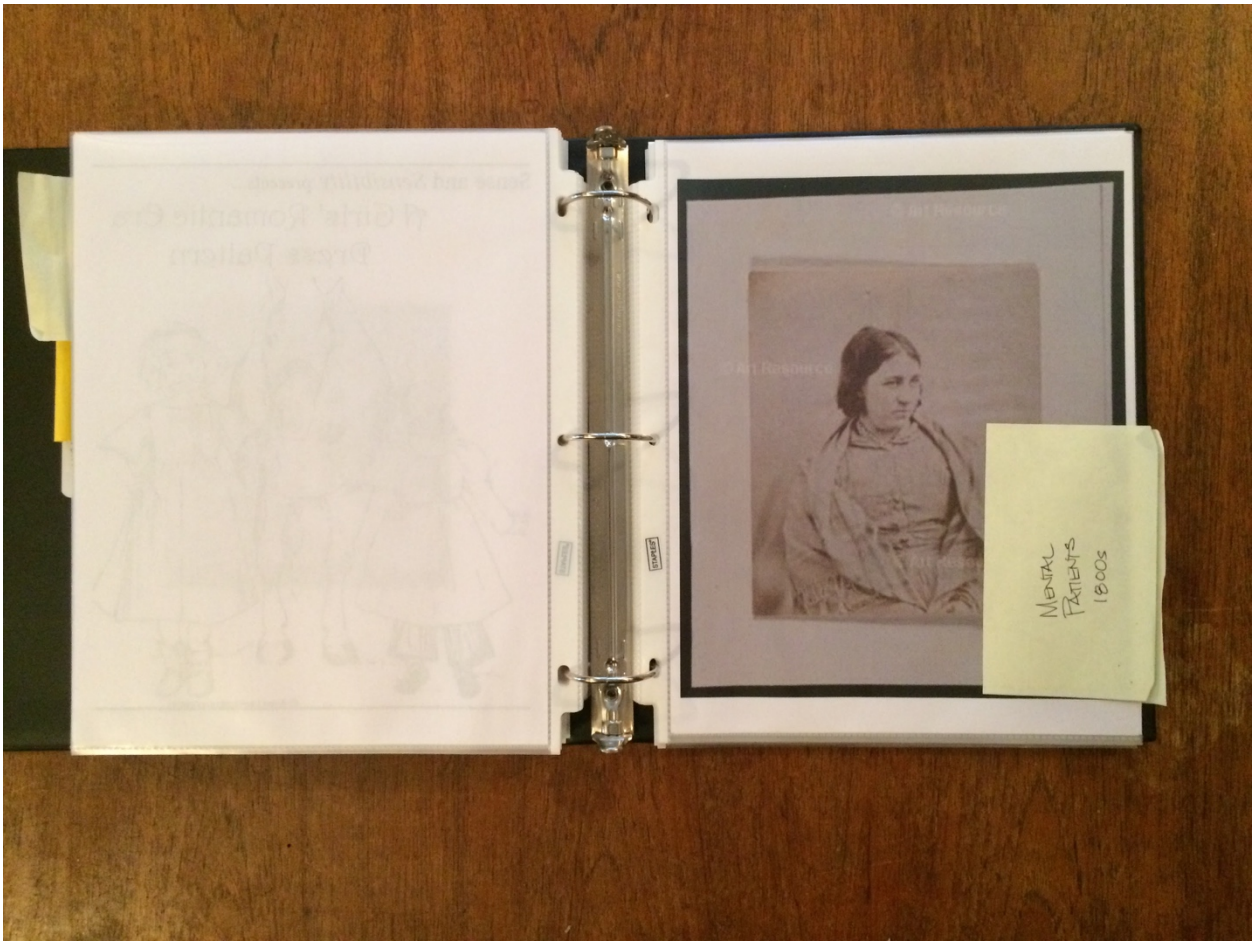
Mama (2013)

(Fig. 1.1) Film still of the character Mama. Source: *Mama (2013)*. Accessed January 24, 2019. https://www.imdb.com/title/tt2023587/mediaviewer/rm2011199488.

(Fig. 1.2) *Mama* Research Binder. Images of the *Mama* Research Binder collected by the costume designer Sequeira Luis. Source: Sequeira, Luis. "*Mama* Costume Research Binder," 2013.

(Fig. 1.3) Bloomingdale Catalogue (Research Binder). Photocopy of Pages from the Ladies Underwear section on a Bloomingdale's catalogue (1866) (photograph by the author) Source: Sequeira, Luis. "Mama Costume Research Binder," 2013.

(Fig. 1.4) Pauline Bonaparte Painting (Research Binder). Photocopy of Painting of *Pauline Bonaparte* by Louise Marie Jeanne (1784–1862) (photograph by the author) Source: Sequeira, Luis. “Mama Costume Research Binder,” 2013.



(Fig. 1.5) Hugh Welch Diamond photographs (Research Binder). Photocopy of photographs by Hugh Welch Diamond of *Patient, Surrey County Lunatic Asylum* (1856) (photograph by the author) Source: Sequeira, Luis. "Mama Costume Research Binder," 2013.

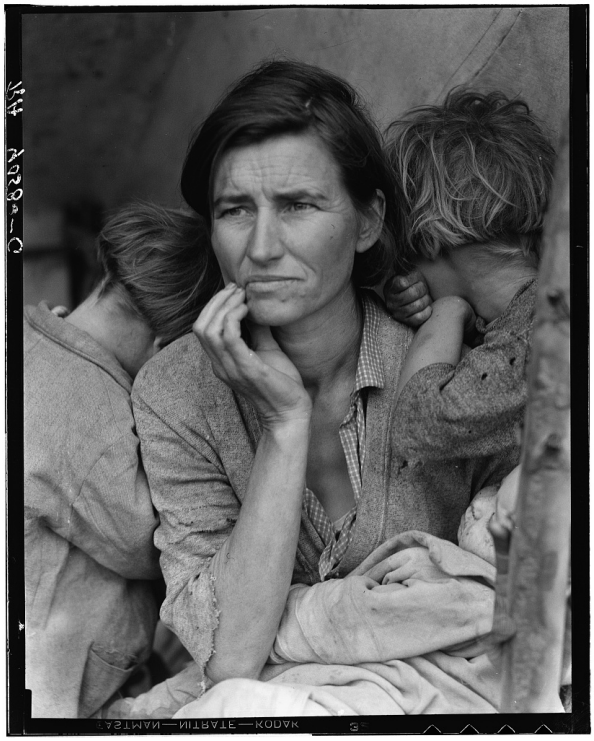
(Fig. 1.6) Hugh Welch Diamond photographs (Research Binder). Photocopy of photographs by Hugh Welch Diamond of *Patient, Surrey County Lunatic Asylum* (1856) (photograph by the author) Source: Sequeira, Luis. "Mama Costume Research Binder," 2013.

(Fig. 1.7) Alexander McQueen: Savage Beauty. Photocopy of *Alexander McQueen: Savage Beauty* V&A Catalogue (2015) (photograph by the author) Source: Sequeira, Luis. "Mama Costume Research Binder," 2013.

(Fig. 1.8) Photographs of Actor Javier Botet in real life and as the Character Mama. Source: Cantilo 101.9, Radio. "Javier Botet: 'De niño me atraían las películas de terror donde había criaturas.'" *Radio Cantilo 101.9* (blog), July 21, 2018. https://www.radiocantilo.com/novedades/javier-botet-de-nino-me-atraian-las-peliculas-de-terror-donde-habia-criaturas-20180721/.

(Fig. 1.9) The children Victoria and Lilly in Mama. Film Still of the children in Mama wearing institutionalized clothing. *Source: Mama (2013)*. Accessed January 24, 2019. https://www.imdb.com/title/tt2023587/mediaviewer/rm4149128448.

The Hunger Games (2012)

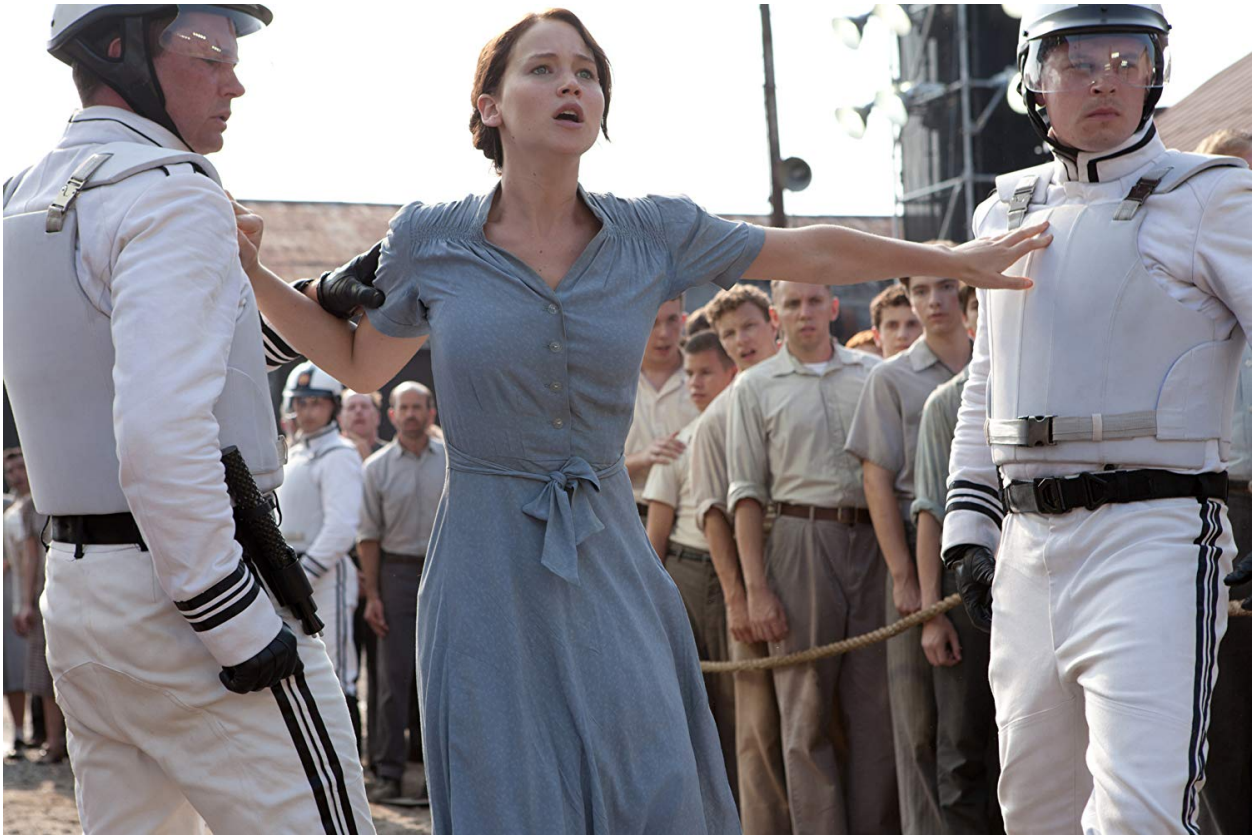


(Fig. 2.1) Lange, Dorothea. Migrant Mother (Florence Owens Thompson). 1936. www.loc.gov/pictures/resource/fsa.8b29516.

(Fig. 2.2.1) Everdeen's Hunting Outfit 01 "Jennifer Lawrence in The Hunger Games (2012)." IMDb. Accessed January 24, 2019. https://www.imdb.com/title/tt1392170/mediaviewer/rm2148839936.

(Fig. 2.2.2) Everdeen's Hunting Outfit 02 "Jennifer Lawrence and Liam Hemsworth in The Hunger Games (2012)." IMDb. Accessed January 24, 2019. https://www.imdb.com/title/tt1392170/mediaviewer/rm4235309824.

(Fig. 2.2.3) Everdeen's Hunting Outfit 03 "Jennifer Lawrence and Liam Hemsworth in The Hunger Games (2012)." IMDb. Accessed January 24, 2019. https://www.imdb.com/title/tt1392170/mediaviewer/rm4261920512.



(Fig. 2.3.1) Everdeen's Blue Reaping Dress 01 "Anthony Reynolds, Judd Lormand, and Jennifer Lawrence in The Hunger Games (2012)." IMDb. Accessed January 24, 2019. https://www.imdb.com/title/tt1392170/mediaviewer/rm2491343616.

(Fig. 2.3.2) Everdeen's Blue Reaping Dress 02 "Elizabeth Banks and Jennifer Lawrence in The Hunger Games (2012)." IMDb. Accessed January 24, 2019. https://www.imdb.com/title/tt1392170/mediaviewer/rm4033983232.

(Fig. 2.4) Everdeen's Red Dress. "Stanley Tucci and Jennifer Lawrence in The Hunger Games (2012)." IMDb. Accessed January 24, 2019. https://www.imdb.com/title/tt1392170/mediaviewer/rm1975955712.

Die Hard (1988)

(Fig. 3.1) Photograph of Bruce Willis donating one *Die Hard* undershirt. Bruce Willis presents an undershirt he wore as John McClane in *Die Hard* (1988) as a donation from the Twentieth Century Fox costume collection to the *Smithsonian's* National Museum of American History.Source: "Die Hard Donation | Arts & Culture | Smithsonian." Accessed January 25, 2019. https://www.smithsonianmag.com/arts-culture/die-hard-donation-157895572/.

(Fig. 3.2) Photograph of the Smithsonian *Die Hard* undershirt 01. Photographs by the Smithsonian's National Museum of American Arts of a film costume worn by Bruce Willis as John McClane in Die Hard (1988). Source: Lintelman, Ryan. *Film Costume Die Hard (1988)*. 2017. Photograph. Washington. Entertainment Collection National Museum of American History | Smithsonian Institution.

(Fig. 3.3) Photograph of the Smithsonian *Die Hard* undershirt 02. Photographs by the Smithsonian's National Museum of American Arts of a film costume worn by Bruce Willis as John McClane in Die Hard (1988). Source: Lintelman, Ryan. *Film Costume Die Hard (1988)*. 2017. Photograph. Washington. Entertainment Collection National Museum of American History | Smithsonian Institution.

(Fig. 3.4) Photograph of the *Hollywood Costumes* Exhibition in the V&A. Photographs by the Victoria and Albert Museum of the installation of a film costume worn by Bruce Willis as John McClane in Die Harder (1990). Source: Lodwick, Keith. *V&A Hollywood Costume Exhibition*. 2012.

Notes

1 When Barbara Muschietti sent me the script, she mentioned that the September 2011 version was the latest version. Reading the script, I learned that it has scenes that are not in the final version of the film. There are also scenes in the film that do not appear in the script. In addition, the order of some scenes, especially the flashbacks, is different.

2 “The costume Mama is wearing in the long version of the film is very much in tune with the style of Mama in the three-minute short. We wanted it to be simple. We wanted it to be flowy; that was important, so we could play with the breeze. In that sense, Andy is very specific basically when we picked our costume designer Sequeira Andy was very clear on what he wanted, which was simplicity. Andy definitely wanted to express the time from which Mama was, which was not the time the film plays in. When you get to see Edith very briefly in the flashback, you see that also her clothes are very simple. She was not fully there, she was not fully developed, her mind was not. She was probably dressed in the most simple way, because either she was being dressed by someone or the clothes that were provided to her were very, very plain.” (B. Muschietti)

3 All pictures are located in an Appendix on page 112.

4 “Luis does his research. He comes up with what he wants, the look, and then he gives me scribbles, quick sketches. I take from there and I play with it. I keep changing it as many times he likes to change it. He gets the idea, gives them back to the producer Del Toro and the director and then it comes back as a final and we start to make it.” (Sacco)

5 “The Mama costume ... it was done in layers. She pretty much had this one costume, and it was done with a lot of layers of silk, so we got a long floaty effect. Ombré, so it would have the darker end, which makes it look a bit airy.” (Williams)

6 “There are certainly aspects of her costume that were digital, but we had produced I think sixteen different dresses for different aspects of the film, for every separate element.” (Sequeira, *First Interview with Author, Part 1*)

7 The seventeen black-and-white photographs of upper-class families in the research binder are most likely daguerreotypes, and belong to the same period (1840–1870) of the other research material. Their provenance could not be clarified completely, but some of the images could be located on Pinterest.

8 Jessica Chastain (01:35) in behind-the-scenes interview: “He doesn’t move like a normal human flesh-and-blood person would. What he can create, it really feels like it’s from another planet.” (livvie brundle)

9 Del Toro (01:54): “So we knew we had an actor at the center in prosthetics and then we added the elements of the hair as a floating entity digitally.” (livvie brundle)

10 “I knew I wanted movement, it was a question of whether it was a fluid movement or was it a scrappy movement, or was it a combination of both” (Sequeira, *Second Interview with Author*); “I had storyboards and this dress had to become a cocoon and how we gonna do that? So, we build it and we had special effects helping us and at some point we had I think seven people holding lines at various areas away from the set to bring that fabric out.” (Sequeira, *First Interview with Author, Part 2*)

11 “Cocoon: Mama’s cocoon, in which she envelops Lilly at the end of the film, was a hybrid of photographic, compositing, and CGI cloth simulation techniques. As the cloth began to wrap around Mama, Andy wanted each petal to move with its own specific tentacle-like nature. Flowing CGI cloth pieces were successively added into the mix, culminating in a 100% CGI cocoon in a fully-animated sequence of completely digital shots as the cocoon fell down the cliffside, struck a branch, and exploded into a choreographed dynamic swarming simulation of thousands of digital moths.” (Mr. X Inc » Blog Archive » Mama)

12 McCorristine analyzes how the idea of dress of a ghost developed in nineteenth-century England discourse about spiritualism. “If the spiritualistic hypothesis was true, should the soul which has returned to visit the earth not be perfectly nude, ethereal, or at least clothes-less? This question of spectral clothing would prove a central point of contention within the popular literature on ghosts and hallucinations after the spread of spiritualism, and indeed, in the spiritualist press itself. (McCorristine 91–93)

13 In an interview Andy talks about Mama singing: “She does sing. It’s one of those reflections on the girls. You see the girls singing and it’s something they learned from Mama.” (Rich)

14 These glasses play a symbolic role in signifying her as a human; by losing them and her sharp vision she is ready to enter the otherworldly experiences of Mama. Victoria loses her glasses in the cabin and during her five years of abundance she only sees her world as blurry. Later in the mental institution, she gets glasses again, provided by the Institute, given to her by Lucas, her new foster father. As a foster child, Victoria takes off her glasses when switching from Annabel’s to Mama’s influence zones. Subsequently, Mama destroys Victoria’s new glasses and makes her illiterate again.

15 (“We wanted to make clear that these girls had been in the wild, there was no baby fat, there was no ... they were to the wire, they were like Mama.” A. Muschietti, *Mama*)

16 The Motion Picture Association of America’s (MPAA) film-rating system is used in the United States and its territories to rate a film’s suitability for certain audiences, based on its content. Rated PG-13 reads as: Parents Strongly Cautioned—some material may be inappropriate for children under 13. (“Motion Picture Association of America Film Rating System”)

21 The term “haptic” links vision and touch, understanding that visual experience is not cut off from sensory perceptions, and therefore, in discerning texture, the eye is responsive to it as well. Laura U. Marks, whose work is at the forefront of approaches to the haptic in Film Studies, offers the following definition: “Haptic perception is usually defined as the combination of tactile, kinesthetic, and proprioceptive functions, the way we experience touch both on the surface of and inside our bodies. In haptic visuality, the eyes themselves function like organs of touch.” (162)

22 “As sensory film theory seeks to remind us, the experience of watching films is material, embodied, and experientially “thick.” Moreover, films touch us, impacting on our watching bodies (generating goose bumps and other physiological signs of affect) or offering images that appeal to our sense of touch.” (Donaldson 4)

19 “In school, they tell us the Capitol was built in a place once called the Rockies. District 12 was in a region known as Appalachia.” (Collins 42)

20 Everdeen’s dress is soaked in memories of her mother wearing it. We see a boy in the crowd with a grey stain on his beige shirt (00:17:07) just a few moments before we see Gale (00:16:58) with some threads sticking out from the yoke of his shirt. The girl standing beside Everdeen and Prim’s mother (00:15:17) has threads hanging from her dress sleeve.

21 The more intense colours in the film might come from the colour grading in post-production. The light used in the scene can change the colour of a costume in a movie, and the colour grading was done in post-production, not to mention that each screen or projector interprets colours differently.

22 In my interview with Dr. Barbara Schröter, head of the textile archive of the Museum für Film und Fernsehen in Berlin, Germany, she states that it is sometimes difficult to conserve the applied artificial dirt, as it was intended. These artificial textures are made not permanent or of material which does not bond well with the underlying textile. Schröter confirmed that the meaning of film costumes changes when the original artificial vanishes with time.

23 “Behind this study lay years of frustration with the misunderstood role of Hollywood film costume design in the existing literature documenting film history and fashion design. For the better part of the last one hundred years of film writing, the history of costume design has been given a shabby place on the sidelines. Film costume to some extent share this pitiable distinction with the history of dress, only recently recognized as a serious academic pursuit. The politics of gender is beyond the scope of this investigation, although the field of costume design—and the salary and stats of costume designers—may be directly related to the diminished value of clothing in the patriarchal culture

of scholarship. Additionally, the process of costume design has not heretofore been examined or analyzed systematically or comprehensively. This study will be an in-depth investigation of the purpose, and integral role, that costume design plays in the creation of a modern film." (D. Landis)

24 Barthes writes: "Reading in the sense of consuming, is far from playing with the text. The reduction of reading to a consumption is clearly responsible for the boredom experienced: to be bored means that one cannot produce the text, open it out, set it going. Text is that social space which leaves no language safe." (From Work to Text: "De l'ceuvre au texte," Revue d'esthitique 3, 1971)